

EDMONTON'S 100% INDEPENDENT NEWS & ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

#121 / AUG 13 - AUG 19, 2009  
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# VUEWEEKLY



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**FRONT** >> ROUGH TIMES FOR CABBIES / 7    **FILM** >> DISTRICT 9 / 38    **MUSIC** >> FOLK FEST REVUE / 48

**OUTDOOR ADVENTURES** >> UCI WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS / 21    >> OUTDOORS INSIDER / 23    >> CAVE DIVING / 23



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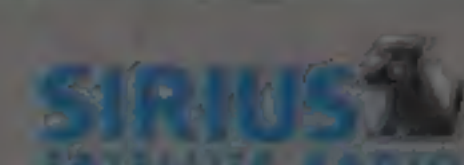
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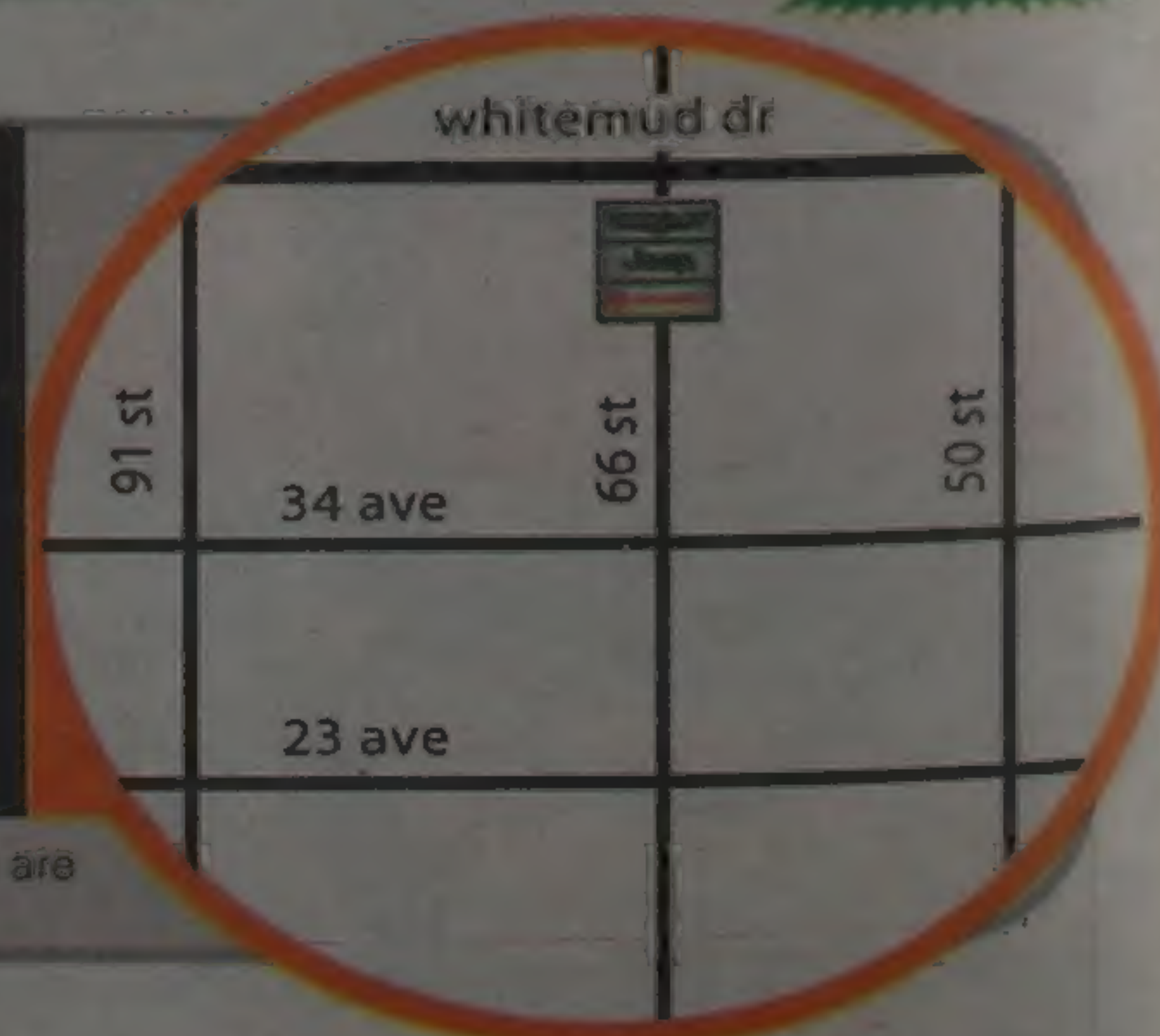


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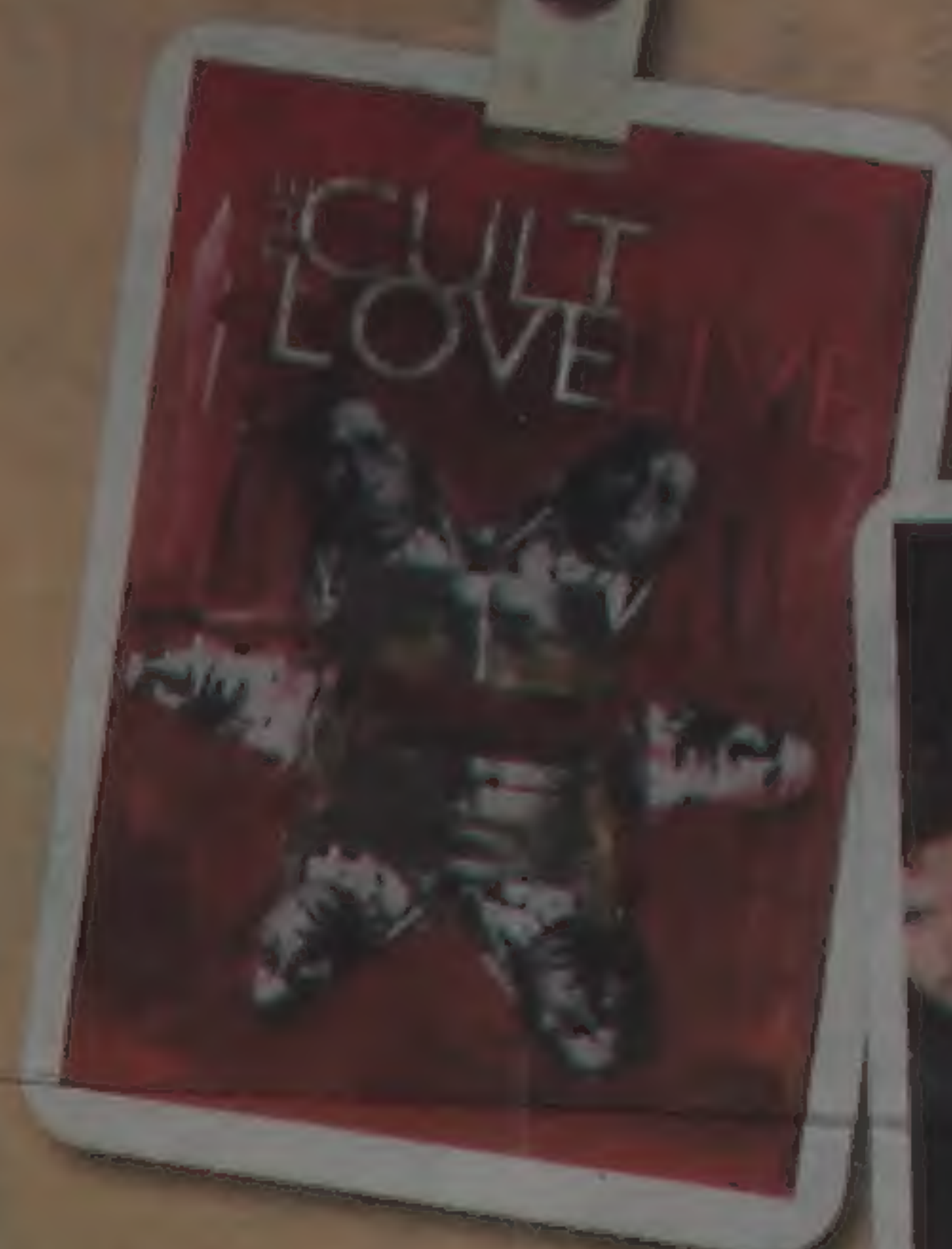




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IN THE CITY

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2 - 7PM

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## VUEWEEKLY.COM

### VUETUBE // VIDEOS



Ben Stevenson performs live at Vue Weekly

### ARTS // FRINGE

Play reviews as they happen throughout the weekend

### SEX IN THE CITY 2009

This year's survey is now online. Tell us all your dirty little secrets.  
[vueweekly.com](http://vueweekly.com)

### FILM // SIDEVUE

The Rise of the '80s: Brian Gibson examines the wave of '80s nostalgia in SideVue

### MUSIC // NEW SOUNDS

More album reviews online.  
[vueweekly.com/newsounds](http://vueweekly.com/newsounds)

### DISH // DISHWEEKLY.CA

Restaurant reviews, features, searchable and easy to use.  
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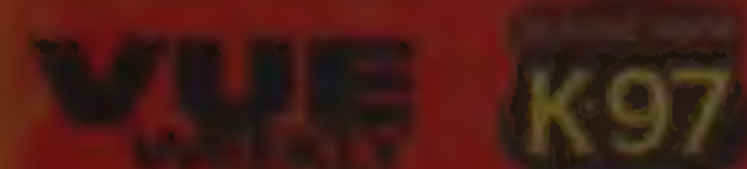
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## EDITORIAL

### Vuepoint

## No butts about it

SCOTT HARRIS  
// SCOTT@VUEWEEKLY.COM

With a few salient exceptions—you know, murder and theft being high on the list—it's hard to think of many individual actions that are more obviously contrary to ingrained and universally accepted societal norms than littering.

Dating back to the early 1970s, decades of public education, including such iconic campaigns as the crying American-Indian commercials and "Don't Mess With Texas" campaign, have driven home the relatively self-evident idea that it's unacceptable to throw your garbage wherever you damn well please.

But despite being a concept that the average head of cattle most likely has the mental capacity to grasp, the idea that littering isn't acceptable has somehow managed to elude a disproportionate number of smokers, who for some inexplicable reason consider their toxin-laden butts to be distinct from other forms of trash, and perfectly OK to toss anywhere they see fit.

The practice is so widespread that an audit of litter conducted by the City in

2007 showed that more than a third of small litter in Edmonton was cigarette butts, which can take a decade to break down. The problem became more acute with the introduction of public smoking bans, which forced smokers onto the streets and made the sidewalks on popular strips like Whyte and Jasper unsightly gauntlets of butts.

Now, after putting in place ashtrays and painting instructions on sidewalks and conducting a media campaign to encourage smokers to take responsibility for their detritus, the City has announced a two-week blitz on Jasper Ave, which will start with warning tickets followed by the issuing of \$250 fines after August 16.

Two questions arise: why restrict such an obvious, necessary and easily enforceable bylaw to one stretch of the city, and why in the name of all that's holy proceed with it only after another week of toothless warnings? Simply put, if these morons haven't grasped the concept by now, another week of education isn't going to change anything. A \$250 hit likely will.

All handing out written warnings will do at this point is give self-absorbed smokers in the city one more thing to crumple up and throw on the ground. Start making them pay the price. **V**

## GRASDAL'S VUE



## Letters

Vue Weekly welcomes reader response, whether critical or complimentary. Send your opinion by mail (Vue Weekly, 10303 - 108 Street, Edmonton AB T5J 1L7), by fax (780.426.2889) or by email (letters@vueweekly.com). Preference is given to feedback about articles in Vue Weekly. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity.

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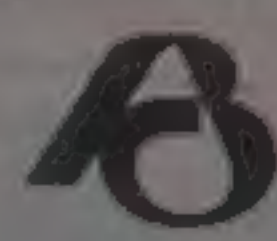
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### JUST MAKE ETS BETTER

David Berry's review-cum-diatribes about the EDDIE Bus ("Road to Nowhere," Jul 23 - Jul 29, 2009) was a fertile example of how difficult it is to please Edmontonians, whose tendency is to denigrate the city they generally don't move away from or move back to eventually/recurringly. I'm reminded of an old saw about familiarity and contempt, and another about misery and company.

ETS seems to have a department dedicated to adapting transit services to quaint Edmonton-focused experiences, and at first blush that's hard to criticize for its sincerity. Things like BOB (Behaviour On the Bus) seem the outcome of staff lunchroom conversation. But the flaw—second only to virtually clandestine advertising—might be that the clientele, of which I am one, really just wants a transit system that runs smoothly and efficiently and, with any luck, becomes ever-more popular.

Rather than one special bus dedicated to a subset of the transit destinations, how about a brochure for a self-guided tour of all the city's notable offerings, via regular routes, and a blurb about the day pass (\$7.50)?

Again, it really seems that ideas for things like the EDDIE Bus come from a positive, creative place, but little im-

provements to the overall system and rider experience could be more feasible and worthwhile.

Greg deJong

### DEMOCRACY, NOT A COUP

As an Edmontonian, who lives in Honduras for a large part of the year, I had to write you. The recent article on Honduras ("O Canada, what are we doing?" Jul 23 - Jul 29, 2009) is loaded with wrong information.

The military procedure of removing Zelaya on June 28 was acted on orders from the Congress and the Supreme Court. There was no military coup. The government that is in power now are still in power after the Congress put the next senior elected member of their party into the president's role until a new election is held in November. Some ministers have changed, but it is the same party and the same MPs in Congress.

"Shut down numerous media outlets"? No, only a couple. Especially the Venezuelan TV station Telesur, which is owned by Chavez and never showed the numerous peace marches for the new government that were on view throughout the entire country.

"Imposed a curfew"? Absolutely, what a great idea: midnight to 4:30 am, it

sure keeps the anarchists from blowing up things. We have peace and the easy curfew is not hurting our freedoms during this tough time.

"Hundreds of thousands" of people marching for Zelaya? Are you kidding me? Show me the photos. Have you seen the few hundred thousand people that were marching in white shirts, supporting the Micheletti temporary government? I have photos, and so do the Honduran media outlets who showed them daily, online and in print. Ask the police about the numbers of pro-Zelaya protesters. Yes, they are blocking some roads, but hundreds of thousands? Wrong.

Killing demonstrators? Gimme a break. The two people that have been killed in a total of four weeks, were on the same day, at the Toncontin airport in Tegucigalpa. Spurred on by Chavez and money from Zelaya, anarchists and supporters decided to attempt to take over the main airport. They rushed the police and threw rocks and the police pushed back. It was not a peaceful protest. Since that day, demonstrators from both sides have been for the most part, peaceful, with police looking for those who are looking at escalating the violence.

Thank you Peter Kent for looking into the facts and supporting Honduran democracy.

Murray Russ



# Taxi cab confessional

Increased rents and fewer fares are putting the squeeze on Edmonton cabbies

BY BRYAN BIRTLES

// BRYAN@VUEWEEKLY.COM

Driving a cab at night in the city of Edmonton has never been the easiest job in the world; the threat of violence is ever-present, and customers tend to come exclusively from the unruly drunken hordes that congregate nightly on Whyte and Jasper. These days, the job isn't being made any easier by the lack of customers, the implementation of expensive safety shields, rising rents and expensive entry fees that were originally designed to get more taxis on the road at night, but which some drivers say are scaring away customers.

Jacob Boz, who, even having driven a cab for four years, is one of the youngest drivers in the city, is considering giving up driving for a living so he can earn a more stable income. While he loves driving a cab Boz says he just can't make enough money to support himself and his infant son, and though he stuck it out during a gruelling winter in the hopes that the busy summer season would help him get ahead, it's just not happening.

"I'm short-shift, meaning I [can] drive 12 hours a day for seven days a week—I can drive whenever I want and it costs me \$370 to do that, plus gasoline," he explains, pointing out that he only takes Sunday off. "After paying rent I'm pulling in approximately \$200 [per week]. It's gotten to this point for the past two months—it's just incredible. I can't afford to drive a cab—right now it's an expensive hobby. You can't feed your family on what you're making."

On a Saturday night during the Edmonton Indy—supposedly the taxi industry's busiest weekend of the year—Boz took me out on his normal weekend route, driving between downtown and Whyte Ave looking for a fare. There weren't many. What there was were plenty of options for bar patrons. Turning around the corner after he picked me up we rolled past the Oil City Roadhouse, directly across the street from the Bank's tent party, one of the main attractions during the Indy, only to find seven cabs milling about on the block, hoping to pick up an elusive fare. This was shortly after 11 pm.

We drove all the way down Jasper Ave to Grierson Hill before taking the Low Level Bridge across the river to try and find a "flag" on Whyte Ave. Coming down 99 Street and turning onto Whyte, the road is swimming with cars and a number of bar patrons are standing around in groups outside of whichever club they'd emerged from, smok-



MR. CAB DRIVER >> The flags are few and far between for cabbie Jacob Boz // Bryan Birtles

ing cigarettes and laughing. No one flags. Boz and I head all the way down the Ave, both of our heads on constant swivel in the hopes of finding someone. No luck. We head back downtown.

As we drive across the river, Boz recounts that a few years ago life was easy—wall to wall fares, big tips, plenty of business.

"You could make a lot of money," he recalls. "It depends how much you work but on a Friday or a Saturday night there were \$500 nights—that was two years ago. There was times when I made \$600 in one night. I'll make \$150 on a Friday night now. That's the difference, it's huge, it's drastic. On a Wednesday you're lucky if you come home with \$80—that's not paying the

rent. Sometimes it's \$30."

In addition to rents that were raised to pay for the cost of the safety shields—Boz explains that in March his rent went up by \$30 a week—it's the late-night entrance fee that is killing his business. With a lack of disposable income to spend on a safe ride home, many bar patrons are opting to not take a cab.

"The entrance fee is a huge factor—I think it's scared off a lot of clients. People aren't expecting it so when it happens to them it's overwhelming," Boz opines. "The fare starts at \$6.60 past 11 o'clock and that's changed the whole context of getting inside a taxi—I think it's one of the most expensive entrance rates in North America. Right now the economy

is affecting Edmonton just as much as anywhere else and definitely a lot of people aren't getting inside of a taxi after 11."

Phil Fearon, an employee of the city and the administrator and non-voting member of the Vehicle for Hire Commission—the city commission that sets the regulations regarding entrance fees and shield requirements—thinks that there are many more factors than just increased entrance fees that might be contributing to the lack of business for cabbies in Edmonton. According to Fearon, one of the biggest problems is that there are significantly more cabs on the street than there were a few years ago. In addition to Airport Taxi, which runs customers into the city from the airport, a number of drivers

town and on Whyte Ave, Boz wonders aloud how all of these people could be getting home.

"The bars are still filling up, there's still alcohol being consumed," he points out. "People are driving home drunk and I think it's a huge deal. People have been closing their eyes to that."

Barney Stevens, program coordinator for the Curb the Danger program and a retired member of the Edmonton Police Service, is well aware that Edmonton continues to have a significant drunk-driving problem, though he believes the message conveyed through Curb the Danger, the Checkstop Program and the numerous commercials about the dangers of drinking and driving is getting through.

"I think the messaging has certainly helped. I believe that there's a good per-

**I can't afford to drive a cab—right now it's an expensive hobby. You can't feed your family on what you're making.**

who would normally head out to BC in the summer for better paying work as truck drivers haven't left because that work isn't available.

"For whatever reason, when economies slow down and long-haul truck drivers lose their jobs or some cab drivers that used to leave the city of Edmonton each year and go to northern BC and drive gravel trucks and then come back to drive taxi in October or November, their summer job away from Edmonton has dried up so they've stayed here—so the reality is that today we have more taxis on the road," he explains. "Combine that with the fact the economy has slumped a bit and there are fewer people taking taxis—if you can walk six or seven blocks you won't take a taxi."

Fearon says that in the near future the commission will be voting on a proposal which could see the late-night surcharge scrapped from Sunday to Wednesday nights, a move which could help alleviate the money woes of drivers.

**Back in Boz's cab**, however, the money woes continue. By shortly after 1 am he's driven only two short fares, while the number of cabs lined up on the block between Oil City and the Bank has ballooned to 19.

Boz is worried about the money, but he's also concerned about how the thousands of people who are on the street partying will be getting home tonight, with so many cabs sitting empty just waiting for a fare. Pointing to the significant amount of traffic that can be found on any given weekend down-

centage of our young drivers today that are using designated drivers and stuff and not even thinking of drinking and driving. I go back 44 years in the organization and I can tell you that society had some changes in the mid '70s to early '80s—drinking and driving is not as accepted now as it was back then," he says, but admits that there is a long way to go until the city's nighttime hotspots are free of drunk drivers. "With our Curb the Danger program, the way we collect the information when people phone in [to report a suspected drunk driver], we keep ourselves a little database here and we're able to pinpoint the hot spots, and we know that Calgary Trail is one of our hot spots after midnight, the Whitemud is one of our hotspots after midnight, so people leaving that Whyte Avenue area, there's a certain segment of them that are drunk driving."

Whether or not increased awareness of the dangers of drunk driving, reduced late-night fares during the week or any other changes that may be coming will make earning a decent living easier for cabbies in this city is up in the air, but Boz probably won't be sticking around to see if things work out or not. As he recently wrote on his revealing blog, where he recounts the numerous adventures he gets into driving a cab in Edmonton ([myfares.blogspot.com](http://myfares.blogspot.com)), he's "kinda given up hope of continuing driving." It should come as no surprise, however. The night I hit the streets with Boz, even though it was supposed to be one of the busiest weekends of the year, he went home with just \$64. **V**

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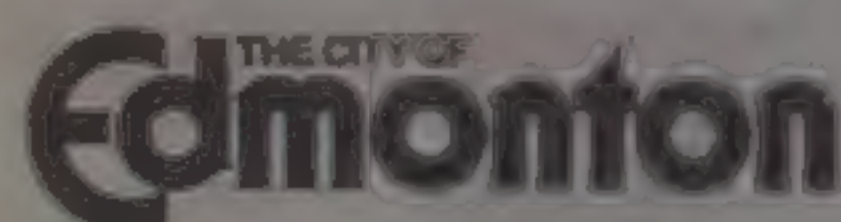
The City of Edmonton Trails, Paths and Routes Advisory Committee (TPRAC) is receiving applications for two new members. TPRAC works towards the enhancement of Edmonton's environment for walking, running, cycling, inline skating and travel by other active modes.

The TPRAC provides City of Edmonton civic administration with advice on plans, maintenance and projects affecting multi-use trails and non-motorised transport on sidewalks and cycling routes throughout the entire city. The committee also initiates projects to bring forward pertinent issues.

Committee members represent a broad range of users, ages and abilities from different areas of the city. Meetings are every second month, usually Downtown on Mondays at 5:30 p.m.

To apply, send contact information and a page or two explaining your interest in Edmonton's trails, paths and routes. Also outline what skills or experiences you can bring to the committee. Applications can be sent to: [tprac@edmonton.ca](mailto:tprac@edmonton.ca).

Deadline for applications is **August 21, 2009**.



For more information,  
phone 780-496-2615 or see  
[www.edmonton.ca/tprac](http://www.edmonton.ca/tprac).

## Issues

Issues is a forum for individuals and organizations to comment on current events and broader issues of importance to the community. Their commentary is not necessarily the opinion of the organizations they represent or of *Vue Weekly*.

# The showdown that wasn't

On the issue of climate change, there are no real political leaders in Canada



BURN 'EM IF YOU GOT 'EM >> A lack of political leadership means no meaningful action on emissions in Canada // David Dodge, the Pembina Institute

**RICARDO ACUÑA**

// [UALBERTA.CA/PARKLAND](http://UALBERTA.CA/PARKLAND)

It was supposed to be the "Showdown in Regina." It ended up being just another premiers' conference.

It was the hope of climate activists to use the annual gathering of the Council of the Federation to exploit the apparent rift that had developed amongst some of Canada's premiers on the issue of climate change in order to increase the profile of the issue and perhaps even get some action.

They focused their activism in particular on Saskatchewan's Brad Wall and Alberta's Ed Stelmach—both of whom have been strong and vocal opponents of a national cap-and-trade system for emissions, and both of whom are putting all of their climate change eggs in the "technology will save us" basket.

The idea was actually quite simple: shame the country's other premiers into pointing the finger at Alberta and Saskatchewan as climate laggards, and force an interprovincial showdown that would result in the Prairie provinces having no choice but to move forward on addressing climate change.

Despite some clever and well-organized protests and actions, however, the expected showdown never developed. In fact, quite the opposite happened—

the premiers ended the meeting with a fluffy statement saying only that Canada would be "well-served to work with the United States on a continental approach" to emissions reductions.

That was it. No debate, no arguments and certainly no progress. In fact, Brad Wall said after the meetings that "every single premier at this table respects the fact that other premiers and provinces have taken significant action with respect to the issue of carbon, with respect to the issue of climate."

As for which premiers and provinces, and which significant actions Premier Wall was referring to, your guess is as good as mine.

And that was the fundamental problem with the expectation that somehow the country's other premiers would take off the proverbial gloves and go after Alberta, Saskatchewan and Ottawa: there is simply no premier or province that can be called a leader on climate change in any true sense of the word.

Are Alberta and Saskatchewan being obstructionist and getting in the way of anything that might properly force the oil, gas and coal industries to seriously curtail their emissions? Absolutely. Has any province put in place legislation and caps that will have any significant impact on emissions? Absolutely not.

From a token, and thus ineffective, carbon tax in British Columbia to Ontario joining the Western Climate Initiative at the same time as it props up Canada's traditional car industry, even the supposed leaders in this country are offering us little more than rhetoric and nice sounding words on climate change.

The same can be said of the recent reframing of the climate change debate around the question of a cap-and-trade system. By focusing on the question of whether there should be regional cap-and-trade systems, a national system or an integrated North American one,

political leaders have very ably moved the discussion away from the scope and speed of the emissions cuts which are required. Instead, the points being made by all the premiers last week highlighted the degree to which they see cap and trade as an investment tool with the potential to benefit the economy and generate jobs in their respective provinces.

In other words, it's all well and good that a cap-and-trade system might lead to reductions in emissions, but what the premiers really care about is how much money will come into their province and how many jobs will be generated. If those types of benefits are not available, will they simply remove their support for the plan despite its supposed benefits to the environment?

A critique of cap and trade as a way of reducing emissions is a subject for another column, but for now it is fair to say that the focus of the political cheerleaders for the system is entirely on the trade rather than the cap.

As we move toward the next international climate summit in Copenhagen at the end of the year, it is critical that we not lose sight of the prize. It is likely that the provincial governments will be invited to form part of Canada's official delegation to Copenhagen, and it is dangerous for us to portray as climate champions politicians who still do not understand the scope of action required.

A sign at one of the protests in Regina last week read "Stelmach, Wall, Harper: Don't play politics with our climate." As activists looking for genuine change and progress, we must heed our own advice and not get caught up in the game of anointing political winners and losers where there are none. ▽

Ricardo Acuña is executive director of the Parkland Institute, a non-partisan public policy research institute housed at the University of Alberta.

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# Murdoch to the rescue?

Can Rupert Murdoch save the newspaper industry by making people pay to read the news online? Probably not, though his reputation as a financial wizard has bewitched a lot of people into believing that he can. More importantly, does the newspaper industry as a whole need to be saved, or is this largely an American problem?

The "Dirty Digger" declared last week that he would start charging for the online content of all his newspapers, including the *New York Post* and *The Times* and *The Sun* in London, before next June. In the United States, where many if not most big-city dailies are in a financial death-spiral, the whole industry prayed that he was right.

Murdoch's reputation as a master of the media universe is so high that even his competitors hope that he can make it work. "I believe that if we're success-

ful, we'll be followed fast by other [print] media," he said, and that's perfectly true.

But past experience argues that he won't be successful: there are too many free alternatives.

When the first newspapers began putting their content on the web 15 years ago, they made it available free in the belief that the online version would supplement rather than replace the highly lucrative print editions, and in the hope that eventually online advertising would provide a healthy new stream of revenue. But the online versions did cut into the print readership, and online advertising rates never rose to match those of the print editions. In the past couple of years, online revenues have ceased to grow entirely.

So when the recession came along, most American newspapers were already in a very vulnerable position, and now many are at death's door. I'm getting used to lawyers' letters from US dailies

explaining that they are now in Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection, and so I can forget about what they owe me for the column as I am not a secured creditor.

Now, here's the odd thing. Large numbers of journalists have also been laid off by their papers in other countries, because advertising revenues and the actual physical size of most papers both shrink in a recession. But this column runs in papers in almost 50 other countries in every continent except Antarctica, and not one of them has declared bankruptcy.

You can't explain it by saying that Internet use has been lower in all of those countries. In fact, the United States has only recently caught up with most other developed countries in the proportion of its population that is online. A likelier explanation for the American disaster is what happened to the US newspaper industry in the 1980s and 1990s.

It was a time of "greed is good" in American capitalism, and newspapers were still

profitable in those decades. The old family owners were bought out by chains that sought returns of 10 – 15 percent a year, far more than the former owners had ever expected. The new owners' first priority was to keep the share prices up, so they had to keep the profits high, so they started cutting costs—and the biggest cost in running a newspaper is the journalists.

There are few newspapers in the United States that employ even half as many journalists as they had 15 years ago. Yet news-gathering was and remains a highly labour-intensive business. In effect, the new owners and managers gutted the content in order to maintain their high profit margins.

Since many US newspapers are also saddled with huge debts because of those takeover deals, the papers were in no shape to withstand the cash famine of the recession. Nor is it obvious how charging for newspaper content online is going to transform their finances now, even if they don't simply drive their current viewers away to the many free sites. It's late in the game, and they just cannot raise enough money through increased

Internet revenue to transform their catastrophic balance sheets.

Elsewhere in the developed world, most newspapers will probably start charging for their websites too, and elsewhere that will win newspapers some further time to think about how they deal with the new reality, for it is very unlikely that we will be getting our news on paper in 20 or 30 years' time. But for many American papers, it is too late now.

Where does the news business go from here? Blogs and "citizen journalism" are not the answer: serious news-gathering costs serious money, and there has to be a business model that supports it. Whoever comes up with the solution will be the new Bill Gates, but we may have to wait a while. As American Internet guru Clay Shirky said recently, the immediate future may consist of "decades of random experimentation, much of which will fail."

Gwynne Dyer is a London-based independent journalist whose articles are published in 45 countries. His column appears each week in *Vue Weekly*.

**DYER STRAIGHT**  
gwynne@vueweekly.com  
Gwynne Dyer

VUEWEEKLY PRESENTS

# EDUCATION 2009 AUGUST 20<sup>TH</sup> ISSUE NEXT WEEK

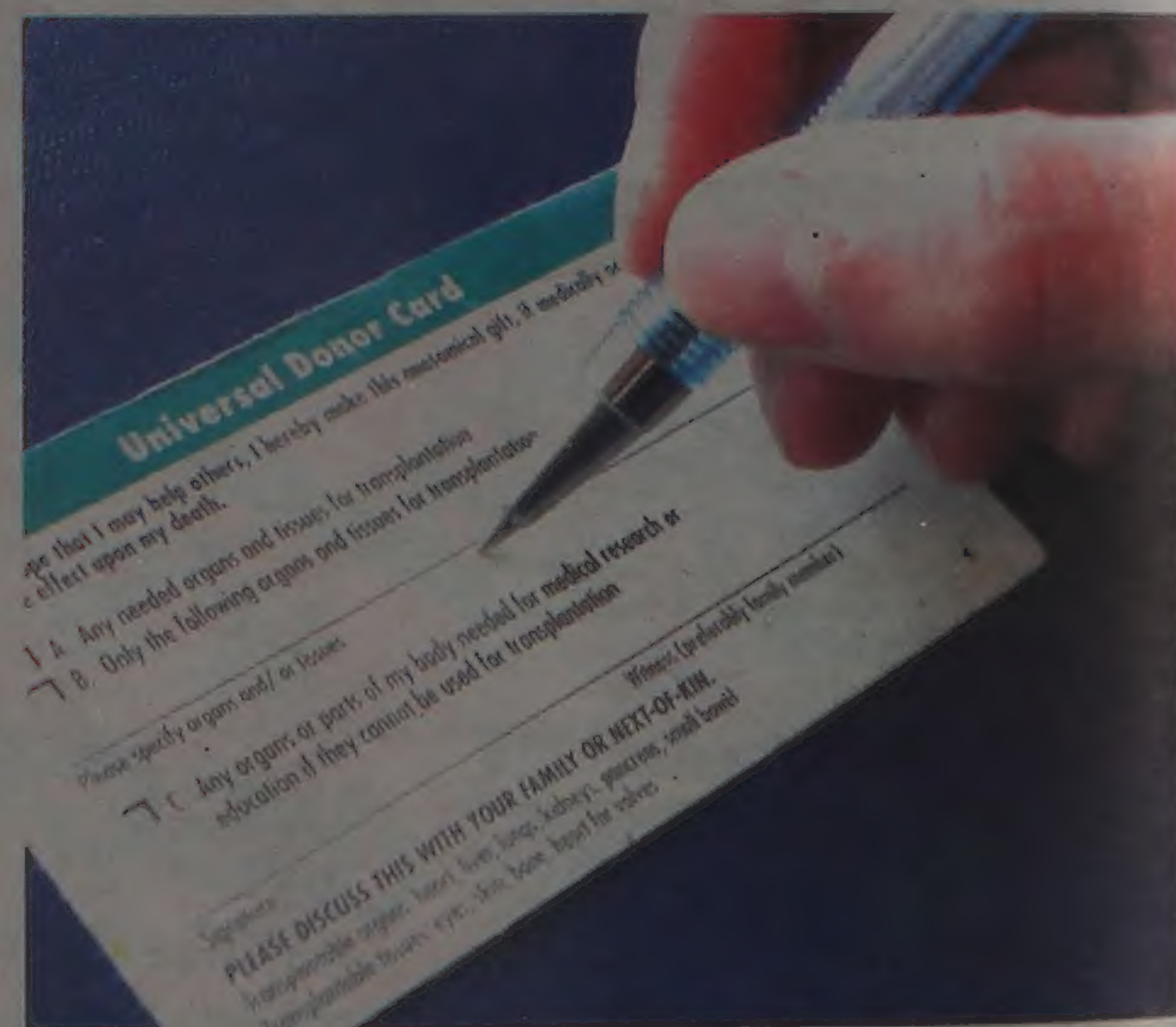
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PROVINCE // ORGAN DONATION

## Have a heart

Alberta has new organ and tissue donation rules, but will it mean more people donate?



**SPLEEN THERE, DONE THAT >>** New legislation aims to increase organ and tissue donation rates // Bryan Saunders

**BRYAN SAUNDERS**  
// BRYANSAUNDERS@VUEWEEKLY.COM

Though no one likes thinking about death, Albertans may want to consider what happens to them a little more thoroughly, in light of recent events. At the beginning of August, the Alberta government's new Human Tissue and Organ Donation Act came into effect, replacing the old Human Tissue Gift Act of 1973, and bringing with it some changes to how organ donation in the province works.

From now on, whenever someone dies in the province of Alberta, the medical practitioner making the determination of the patient's death must consider and document the

deceased's suitability for tissue and organ donation—a new step called "mandatory consideration" which is intended to increase the number of organ donations. If the doctor determines that the deceased could be a tissue or organ donor, the deceased's family must then decide whether or not they want to allow the donation to proceed. Legally—even if someone has already signed their organ donor card—it is still ultimately up to the family of the deceased to decide what happens.

As Heidi Erisman, the executive director of the Kidney Foundation of Canada's Northern Alberta and Territories branch, points out, the new

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12 >>



# Fast enough for you?

## Bell vs Rogers court case points to need for regulation of Internet speed claims

As two of Canada's biggest Internet service providers, Bell Canada and Rogers Communications are fierce rivals that frequently battle for the same customers. That marketplace fight rarely spills into the courtroom, but last month a Rogers advertising campaign prompted Bell to file a \$50 million dollar lawsuit. The result was an end to the campaign and evidence that both companies over-promise the speed of their Internet services.

The case began when Rogers launched a check your speed and Internet ad campaign called "Check Your Speed." The campaign warned users the Internet services "you are paying for may not be what you're getting" and encouraged them to test their connection with an independent third party. The campaign unsurprisingly offered Rogers services as an alternative, promising a "faster speed every time you connect."

Just days after the launch, Bell filed suit, arguing in court documents violations of the Trade-Mark Act and the Competition Act, along with various torts. The company sought \$50 million in general damages, \$1 million in punitive damages, and an injunction blocking Rogers from continuing with its campaign.

Two days later, Rogers dropped the third party testing feature. Rather than using a fully independent third party service, Rogers had used a server located in Seattle, Washington to run its tests. The court found that the distance between users

in Ontario and the speed test server in Washington might help account for slower speeds.

Even more telling was the evidence that placed the spotlight on a Canadian industry practice of advertising the maximum or "up to" speeds to customers, rather than minimum or actual speeds that customers typically obtain. The Rogers campaign was effectively premised on this discrepancy since it encouraged users to check their speeds where they would undoubtedly learn their typical speeds were lower than those promised by their ISP.

The same holds true for Rogers, however. Under cross-examination, a Rogers witness was asked about the Rogers service: "if [the customer] runs the test, and it tells him that his Internet connection speed is less than 10 megabits per second, is he still getting the

Internet speed that he's paying for?"

The response? "The Internet speed he's paying for is 'up to,' as is industry practice. So I believe the answer is yes. We sell an 'up to' service, as is industry practice."

It is this "industry practice" that deserves far closer scrutiny from Canada's telecommunications and competition regulators. While the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission has done little to address the issue, its counterparts in the United Kingdom and Australia have taken action.

Late last month, Ofcom, the British telecommunications regulator, released the results of a study that found more than 50 percent of broadband users in that country are receiving less than half the speed promised by their providers. The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission addressed this issue several years ago, with guidelines for ISPs designed to coun-

ter misleading "up to" speed claims.

The Canadian practices are particularly deceiving since ISPs have also been slow to disclose their traffic management practices, which may often result in deliberate slowdowns for certain applications. Rogers recently admitted it charges tiered pricing for faster upload speeds but that all tiers are throttled to the same speed when using peer-to-peer applications.

As Canada's ISPs battle in court over which company is more deceptive, it is time for Canadian regulators to step in by conducting their own tests on promised speeds and establish clear requirements that bring truth back to ISP advertising. **V**

Michael Geist holds the Canada Research Chair in Internet and E-commerce Law at the University of Ottawa, Faculty of Law. He can be reached at [mgeist@uottawa.ca](mailto:mgeist@uottawa.ca) or online at [michaelgeist.ca](http://michaelgeist.ca).

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2 Pitbull  
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3 Kid Cudi  
Day 'N Nite

4 Soulja Boy Tell'em  
Kiss Me Thru The Phone

5 50 Cent  
Crack A Bottle feat. Dr. Dre and 50 Cent

6 Right Round feat. Ke\$ha

7 Sean Kingston  
Fire Burning

8 Jamie Foxx  
Blame It on the Rain

9 Eminem  
We Made You

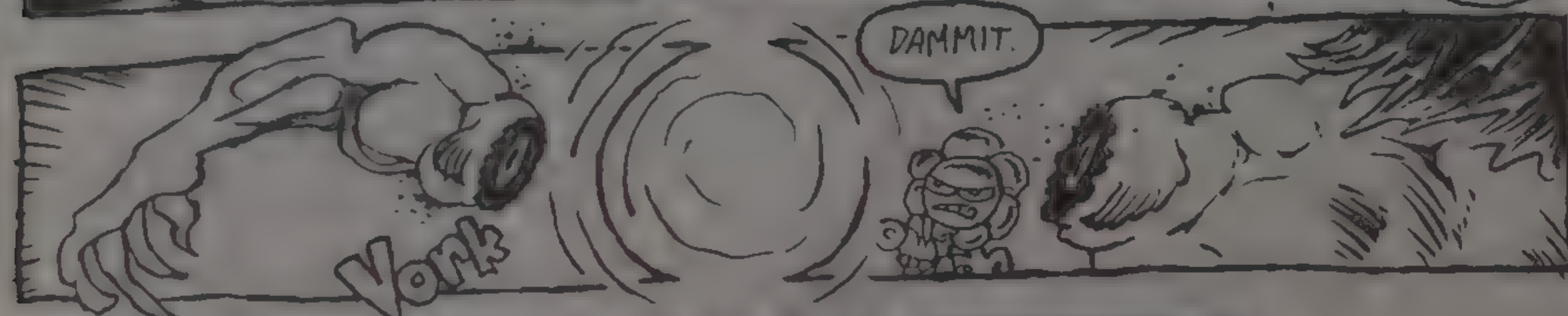
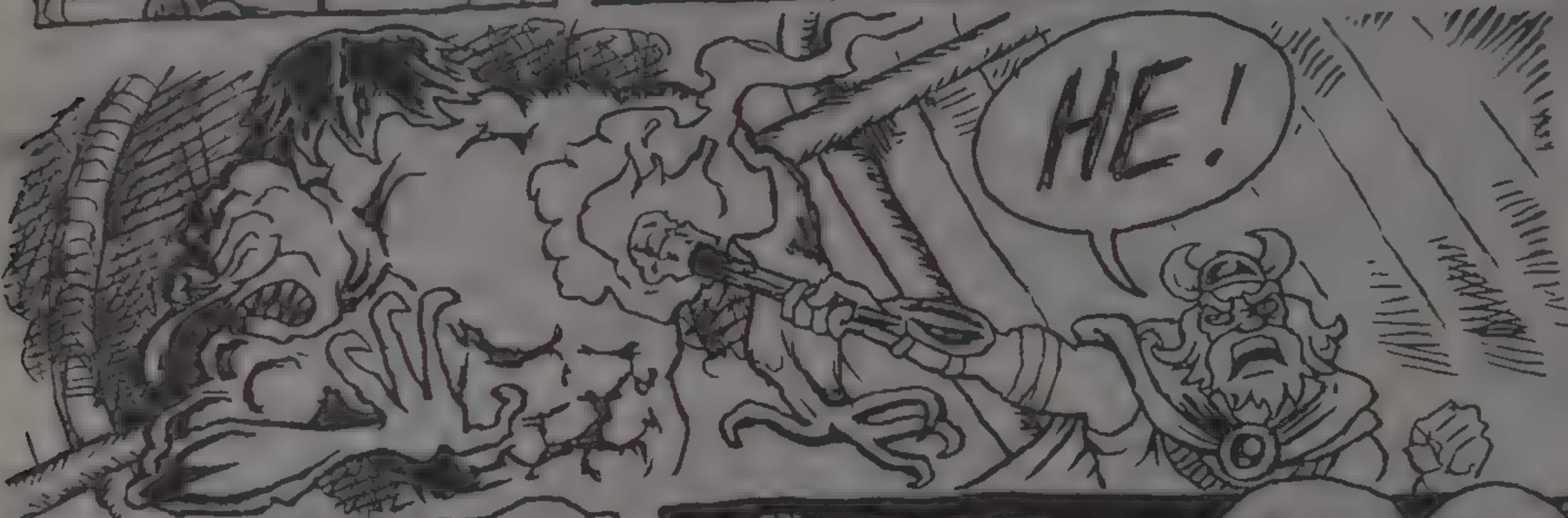
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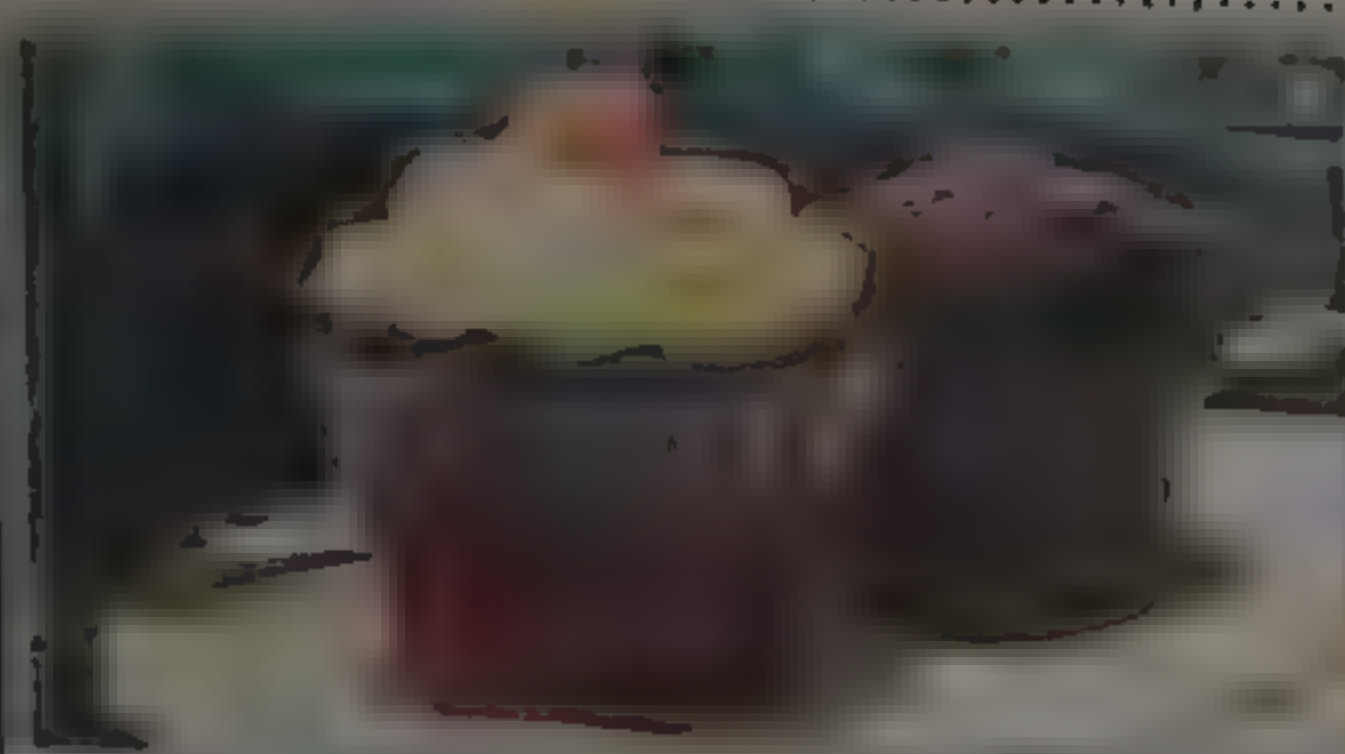
The National Institutes of Health declared scientific consensus two and a half decades ago: low-fat, low-cholesterol diets protect against heart disease. They don't. Low-sugar diets rich in veggies and fruits and organic proteins and essential fats do. **V**

the CRY



"It's much, much cheaper, and the patient's quality of life skyrockets," Foxall notes. **V**





## Restaurant Reviews

Check out our comprehensive online database of Vue Weekly's restaurant reviews, searchable by location, price and type.

### COOKING LESSON // MEXICAN

## Beyond the ethnic aisle

Cooking Mexican the real way opens up a whole new world

By Jan Hostyn

**T**he easiest things are often the best." Those are the words of Ivonne Garces de Isla, owner and chef of Mexico Lindo. She was also, for a few hours one Tuesday night, my cooking instructor. Those words of wisdom were directed my way as I marvelled at the effect a mere chili pepper had on an otherwise fairly standard spinach salad.

"Sauté the chili in a bit of oil and use that oil in your salad dressing. It gives the salad a subdued, slightly smoky flavour, one that you don't usually find in a bowl full of spinach. And if you want the flavour to be even more assertive, sprinkle some crushed, dried chilies over the salad as you're tossing it."

Yup, it was oh-so-simple but amazingly effective. And very good. And something I would never have considered throwing in a salad in the midst of one of my what-can-I-make-for-dinner-tonight-that's-quick-and-good-and-we're-not-totally-bored-of-yet conundrums.

You see, I bake. Not quite in the exquisitely magnificent Art of Cake style, but I do okay. I even enjoy it.

Cooking is a bit different. I do it because I have to—my kids need to eat, after all. Sometimes I'm even quite good at it; the cheddar and potato perogies I've been known to whip up come to mind. It's never inspired, though. I tend to revert to the tried

and true—I grew up making perogies, after all. I'm quite adept at following a recipe, but I struggle with experimenting outside of my very limited comfort zone, especially when it comes to ethnic cooking.

I needed a big dose of help and figured a real live cooking lesson might help. Kind of like Food TV, but where you get to do more than watch and your questions actually get answered. So when I heard Garces de Isla, the wizard behind Mexico Lindo, offers cooking lessons, I couldn't resist. Having a daughter who has recently added Mexican cuisine to her ever-expanding list of obsessions didn't hurt either.

It turns out Garces de Isla doesn't really hold scheduled classes—if you're interested, give her a call and you can figure out what works together. Ideally, she likes to have a minimum of five people and prefers to run classes on Tuesday nights. The cost: \$75 for two hours.

I booked a night and, daughter in tow, arrived at the colourful little restaurant just as it was closing. Garces de Isla greeted us warmly and led us through the dining room, past the swinging doors and into the huge and spotless kitchen. A little table was set up near the back of the kitchen, complete with a multicoloured tablecloth, wine glasses and individual duo-tangs containing the recipes we were about to tackle.

We passed on Garces de Isla's offer

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14 >>



PLANTAIN! >> Ivonne Garces de Isla holds the Mexican staple // Jan Hostyn

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of wine and settled ourselves on our stools with some bottled water instead. Garces de Isla positioned herself at a long counter in front of us, surrounded by bowls and pans, knives and cutting boards.

The cooking lesson had begun.

First up was a brief introduction to the origins of Mexican cuisine—to ~~origins, Garces de Isla said, all~~ originate from Mexico—and then we got to work. Up first: nachos.

Nachos sound simple and not very cooking-ish—but I learned simplicity can be good. It's all about what ingredients you use and how you combine them.

We didn't pour the tortilla chips out of a big plastic bag, we fried corn tortillas to make fresh ones. And we didn't use a can of refried beans, we dumped some black beans into a blender and pureed them. Beans (Mexico boasts eight different kinds, all with their own nuances), cheese and the chips always form the base of the nachos. Then you throw on whatever you feel like.

We tossed on some grated Monterey Jack cheese (they never use cheddar, it's not a Mexican tradition), a few jalapenos and a handful of tomatoes. Then the platter went in the oven, not the microwave (a place my nachos have been known to magically emerge from) because it can make the chips too crispy. The nachos reappeared once the cheese had gently melted. A profusely bubbling concoction with separated cheese is evidently not what you're after.

Simple and interesting with some handy tips thrown in.

**“ We didn't pour the tortilla chips out of a big plastic bag, we fried corn tortillas to make fresh ones. And we didn't use a can of refried beans, we dumped some black beans into a blender and pureed them.**

We went on to make a Mexican salad, albondigas (meatballs) in salsa chipotle, pork with chili and plantains con crema.

Between chopping and blending, I

**MEAT BALLS >>** To which you can add any of over 150 kinds of chili peppers // Jan Hostyn

marvelled at how simple everything was. And again, Garces de Isla laughed and said, "Cooking is not difficult.

fascinating were all the tidbits of information Garces de Isla was full of.

While we were cutting corn tortillas into strips to fry and toss into the salad as croutons, I learned that, in Mexico, corn tortillas are the equivalent of our bread. And that there are over 150 kinds of chili peppers in Mexico—substituting one type of chili for another will totally change the flavour of a dish. And when you dry a chili, it gives it a bit of smokiness, changing the flavour yet again. And you can roast or boil chilis, changing them yet again.

While we were putting together the albondigas, I learned that meatballs

are very popular in Mexico. Adding a bit of cilantro, cooking them in salsa and then ladling everything over top of pasta will give you a Mexican twist on traditional Italian food. I also learned the secret of how to avoid "burping up garlic" is to simply pop the garlic heart out before doing your chopping or smashing. And if your salsa is a washed-out pink, that's simply because it's not cooked because cooking brings out the redness of the tomatoes.

Finally, just as I was about to sample a raw slice of plantain before it was fried in butter and doused with brown sugar and cinnamon, Garces de Isla cautioned me, "Never eat it

raw. You'll be bloated like a cow for three days."

More than anything, Garces de Isla inspired me with her creativity and her passion. And she made everything look oh-so-easy. How it will translate in my own kitchen, well, only time will tell. But I have bought a can of chipotle peppers and some corn tortillas and I'm ready to find out.

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# Drinking Canada

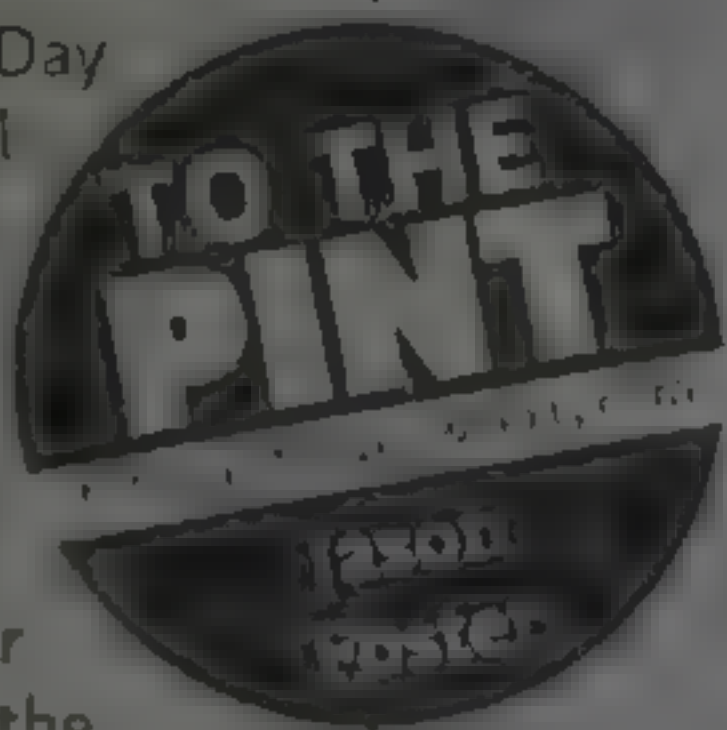
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It's Canada Day and you're at a party. You need a drink to make the night go. What beer would serve as a Canada Day accompaniment? It couldn't be just any Canadian beer, nor could it be a beer you can get in any country in the world. Canada doesn't actually have its own homebred beer style. We have our own take on different beer styles, but all beer styles were born elsewhere and imported here.

The question got me thinking. Lots came to mind right away, but none quite worked. Molson Canadian is both too obvious and too corporate. Robert Simpson's Confederation Ale, or something from Upper Canada Brewing would work, but neither are available in Alberta. There is Tree's Thirsty Beaver, which has potential, but is done in by its obvious double entendre.

I was about to give up on the project when I stumbled across a new arrival from Penticton, BC's Cannery Brewing Company. This relatively young brewery has just added a Maple Stout to its regu-



MAPLE STOUT >> As Canadian as a double-double. // *file*

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REVUE // FUSS CUPCAKES

## Making a fuss

Whyte Ave's cupcake renaissance continues



SCARLETT BLISS >> Two of the flavours of Fuss // Maria Kotovych

MARIA KOTOVYCH  
 STAFF WRITER

**Fuss Cupcakes** opens completely  
 onto Whyte, its tables and colour-  
 ful wares at the counter enticing  
 curious shoppers to step inside. I  
 walk past the tables and the pictures  
 hanging on the walls to examine the  
 colourful cupcakes lined up like little  
 soldiers on the trays. I look through  
 the glass, trying to decide which  
 member of the cupcake brigade I  
 would like to try.

I order two cupcakes (\$2.95 each).  
 Each has its own name, so I ask for a  
 Scarlett O'Hara and a Bliss. The for-  
 mer is a red velvet cake with an iv-  
 ory-coloured cream cheese frosting  
 topped off with a swirl of pink icing  
 and a little white chocolate wafer. The  
 latter is nothing but chocolate—choc-  
 olate butter cream frosting covers the  
 chocolate cake, and a chocolate ga-  
 nache crowns the entire affair.

I also order a medium coffee (\$1.90),  
 which an employee is just about to  
 brew. He chats easily with me, asking  
 about my cough (allergies), and we  
 discuss this topic for a few minutes. I  
 feel comfortable here already.

It's a weekday afternoon, so the  
 shop is quiet, save for the local radio  
 station playing in the background.

The discussion of the two (male)  
 announcers catches my attention—  
 one of them comments about his  
 female friend's complaint that  
 movies are always showing topless  
 women and boobs, but never de-  
 pict full-frontals of men. The two  
 announcers proceed to dissect this  
 topic, a discussion that covers ev-  
 erything from porn, boobs and the  
 difficulty of running with a boner.  
 I wonder if a radio station known  
 for its candour with these kinds of  
 themes is the best one to play in the  
 afternoon. After all, the daytime cli-  
 entele is different from the partiers  
 who are more likely to populate this  
 establishment later in the evening.  
 And then there's the whole question  
 of wanting to listen to that kind of  
 discourse while eating.

The employee brings my coffee, and  
 I add some cream before my first sip.  
 I don't know what this place uses  
 for beans, but my coffee tastes like  
 chicken noodle soup. Frankly, my  
 dear readers, I do give a damn about  
 a good cup of coffee—for me, it's  
 more than a way to get a jolt—so I'm  
 unhappy with what I've just tasted.  
 Disappointed, I hope the cupcakes  
 leave a better impression.

I eye the Scarlett O'Hara, and try the  
 icing first. Not being a fan of frost-



ing that's so sweet it creates immediate cavities in my teeth, esophagus and stomach, I appreciate the tops

even though I know that the delicate chocolate butter cream icing is below, it still manages to sneak up and

**Not being a fan of frosting that's so sweet it creates immediate cavities in my teeth, esophagus and stomach, I appreciate the tops of these cupcakes. For starters, the amount on these beauties is sufficient. Its flavour is strong, yet not too sweet. The candy-flavoured pink icing on the Scarlett O'Hara adds a bit of sweetness to the smoother cream cheese, so it's a pleasant blend of flavours.**

of these cupcakes. For starters, the amount on these beauties is sufficient. Its flavour is strong, yet not too sweet. The candy-flavoured pink icing on the Scarlett O'Hara adds a bit of sweetness to the smoother cream cheese, so it's a pleasant blend of flavours.

The cake itself, though, isn't particularly memorable—I really can't detect much in the way of flavour. I try biting the cupcake so that icing and cake go in together, but I can only taste the former.

My hope now lies in the Bliss cupcake. Its all-chocolate composition already puts it ahead in my mind. For the most part, I enjoy this one better than the Scarlett O'Hara. The cake itself has actual taste to it, and a good one, to boot. The real winner with this one is the ganache-and-icing combo on top, though. The ganache forms a little covering, and

surprise me with its smoothness. We have a winner here.

The nice feature about this store is that the glass wall facing Whyte can open completely, leaving no physical distinction between store and sidewalk. On a nice day, this allows people to sit in the dark chairs for people-watching and people-listening. The downside is that the noise from Whyte's vehicular traffic comes in with an alarming immediacy. It's the motorcycles that bother me the most, especially when they emit their sudden and loud roars. Regardless, the open-concept plan is fun and inviting, and welcomes those walking past to experience what the "fuss" is about. **V**

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#### OPINION

<< CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

tar lineup. Adding maple syrup to a beer seems like the quintessential Canadian brewing creation.

Many brewers have tried experimenting with maple in beer, mostly with lacklustre success in my experience. The beers either end up too sugary sweet or the maple quality disappears. Often, I feel, the beer behind the maple just isn't strong enough to create balance. However adding maple to a robust beer like stout has potential. So I gave it a try.

It is a deep black beer that teases with an optical illusion of caramel highlights when held to the light. It offers a loose, mocha-coloured head. The maple becomes instantly obvious. The aroma has big maple notes, but not syrupy—more of a woody maple quality. The maple overpowers most everything else in the aroma, except for some light chocolaty sweetness. I detect no roast stout aromas.

The stout aspects come through in the flavour. This beer has a fascinating, intense interplay of maple and

burnt dark-chocolate roast with a little charred oak. Light sweetness plays in the background. The maple stands up for itself against the roast. The finish leaves a noticeable, lingering burnt across the roof of the mouth.

This is a take-no-prisoners beer that finds the right mix between maple and roast flavours. However, it may be too focused on these qualities, as it is not as complex as I would like from a stout. If Cannery toned down the maple and roast just a touch it would allow other flavours, like chocolate, cherry and caramel, to come through and make a more well-rounded beer. All in all, I feel it is a worthy, impressive experiment with maple.

Stout may not be the ideal summer beer, but you can drink it and wave your little paper Canada flag in patriotic celebration, on Canada Day or any other day. Who will stop you? You will be doing the classic Canadian thing—drinking beer and reflecting on Canada.

Cannery Maple Stout is available in a few stores around town. The best way to find it is to go to [alberta-liquor-guide.com](http://alberta-liquor-guide.com) and use the online search feature. **V**

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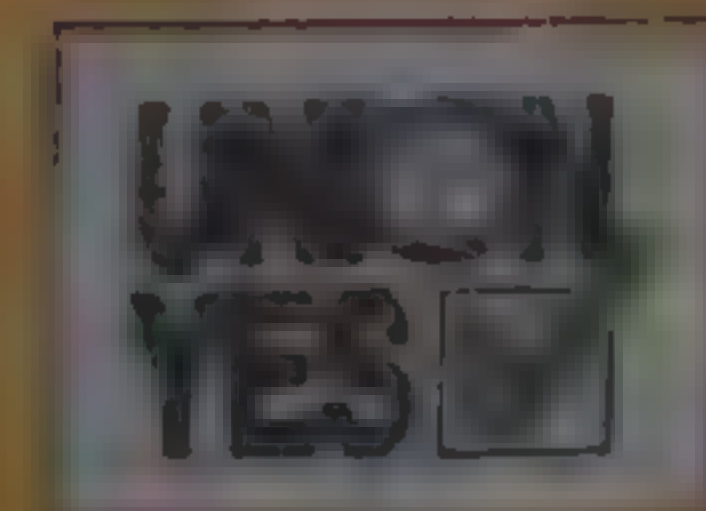
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## EXPEDITION // YUKON RIVER QUEST

# Paddle to eternity

Surviving world's longest river race in the land of midnight sun

LACHLAN MACKINTOSH

"There are strange things done in the midnight sun

By the men who moil for gold."

~ Robert Service

On Lake Lebarge it is calm and cool. Green water and blue sky. In the distance a shape comes into sight. Through binoculars we see not one but two voyageur canoes. If there is sound, we cannot hear it yet. Just the silent motion of paddlers in unison.

Our guide, Whitehorse-born Mark Stenzig, recites from memory the opening stanza of "The Cremation of Sam McGee," with its marvelous hundred-year-old rhymes like, "... on a marge on Lake Lebarge."

Earlier in the week, as the Air North 737 lifted off in Edmonton, the orange setting sun lit up the northwestern sky. Two hours later when we touched down in Whitehorse, it still hadn't reached the horizon. I had come to the top shelf of the continent for the longest river race in the world. The Yukon River Quest was born just over 10 years ago, when Klondike Centennial planners imagined a 50-kilometre hike over the Chilkoot Trail followed by an epic canoe race of close to 1000 kilometres.

What continues today is the 740 kilometre uber-marathon from Whitehorse downriver to Dawson City. Imagine driving 740 kilometres. Then imagine doing that distance in a canoe or kayak. Yeah.

You can compete as a solo or tandem canoe or kayak, or as part of a classic voyageur canoe team. This summer, an international field of 73 teams and 171 paddlers came from as far away as Australia, Japan, Latvia, UK and across Canada and the United States.

There are serious paddlers like Brad Pennington of Houston, Texas, who won the 2008 race in the solo kayak category after finishing fourth in 2007. That year he ran the river with a small camera on his kayak. "I studied the footage, I studied the river and learned from it," he tells me the day before the race begins.

He is not so worried about food or weather conditions, which are highly variable in the Yukon. "The hardest part for me is probably back pain—being in a kayak for so long." A race organizer tells me she has seen kayakers with their torsos wrapped in duct tape to staunch the chafing and bleeding after more than 48 hours of paddling.

Several teams are all about winning. But mostly it's a friendly community of paddlers who have taken a major chunk of holiday time for an epic, once-in-a-lifetime adventure. The emphasis is less on the race than on the odyssey. So, while some teams are going through

their checklist of mandatory onboard items—tent, sleeping bag, waterproof matches, change of clothes, first aid kit—other paddlers head straight to the Yukon Brewing Company for a thirst-aid kit.

Twenty-five-year-olds John Blyth and Genevieve Cote are two of several paddlers and their support teams who take in a midweek tour of the brewery. They drove all the way from Fort Smith, NWT, to be part of the river quest. Blyth says, "I had to scratch [the race] last year, so this year, I just want to finish it." Arm in arm, Cote smiles widely and says, "I want to have a good masochistic time."

**Why come all this way** to the top of the world, to end up with your hands curled like claws and your legs bent like a bug? By the end of the race, many paddlers have hallucinated. Some have urinated over and over again in their river pants. They have endured awful back pain. Some see visions. Others see spots or bands of light. Some see grizzly bear silhouettes in the river bank rock face. Some see the faces of Aboriginal elders. Is there alchemy at work here? What comes from a marathon of deprivation and endurance?

Day two and we're at the Carmacks campground—the official midpoint of the race, where there is a mandatory seven-hour layover for all racers. Support teams arrived in advance and set up tents, campers or RVs. Then they waited in earshot of the dock for reports of teams coming in. These are girlfriends and husbands, brothers or even just fellow countrymen.

The leading teams are already tucked

into their sleeping bags in the campground's special quiet zone, when 55-year-old Andris Stavro of Riga, Latvia, almost rolls his kayak coming into the midpoint dock. He is hurting. Race volunteers grab either end of his kayak, while supporters in matching red Team Latvia T-shirts rush in to help him. Slowly he folds his knees up and out of the cradle, before he is hoisted on to the dock. From his knees, he smiles and waves to the camera, but moments later a member of his team tells me he is not doing well.

Mid-afternoon, word of mouth hops through the remote campground that Michael Jackson has died. I was photographing a local paddler in a cowboy hat, his nose bleeding from exposure. We are hundreds of kilometres from anywhere, in the middle of the Yukon, yet Blackberries tug us back toward a stranger reality than even this.

Another day later, on a cool grey afternoon in Dawson City, almost 51 hours after they left Whitehorse, Team Texans' voyageur canoe crosses the finish line—marked with a simple orange flag—first. The horn blasts on the old Klondike Keno paddleboat and echoes through the valley. A few minutes after the finish, with extra layers on and a tall coffee in hand, 43-year-old Tim Anglin of Dallas, Texas, talked about their boat overturning on a boil in the river, and their crew of six paddlers struggling to get ashore.

Anglin says, "I was scared. I think Wade and I had the hardest time getting out of the river. The current is strong. There was a big air pocket under the canoe, so two of our guys managed to get

up on top and paddle it ashore upside down. The Canadians [Team Dene from Wollaston Lake area, Saskatchewan] pulled over to make sure we were OK. We told them we were fine and to go ahead, but they kind of waited around. I think they could have won the race right there, but they never put us more than a mile behind."

Anglin is shaky, eyes bloodshot, grey whiskers coming in with brown ones, but he goes on, sounding younger and more emotional than his 43 years. "You don't know how long I've been dreaming of the Yukon. Since I was a little kid, since I was seven years old."

His teammate Michael Rendon of Austin, Texas, flashes a burned-out smile when I ask him how it feels to reach Dawson City. "It feels good. It's a beautiful river, but I'm glad we're done."

**Team Dene arrives** just under an hour later. Family members rush down to the rocky shoreline to embrace their men. A three-year-old shouts, "Daddy, daddy, daddy," and gives him a big hug. Wrapped in blankets, the Texans are waiting for them too. The two leading teams greet each other with respect and exhaustion.

Paddlers arrive all through the third night of the race, now two and a half days after they left Whitehorse. Most are dog-tired, but some defy logic and head right out for a jug of beer at Diamond Tooth Gertie's. By Saturday morning, Stavro the Latvian arrives in Dawson City. Like most of the paddlers, he looks like hell when he eventually climbs out of his craft. Like a hibernat-

ing animal remembering how to move his legs again, he wobbles and staggers. Stavro's wife gives him an affectionate slap on the cheek. I overhear him say, "Yeah, I'm OK."

This race isn't for weekend paddlers. Jean-Francois Latour, president of the Yukon River Marathon Paddling Association (the body that organizes the Yukon River Quest) and a former participant, says that on average 10 to 15 per cent of teams will scratch. By the end of the 2009 race, with 10 hours of cold rain, followed by bitter headwinds, 56 of the 73 teams finished the race, or about three quarters of the field.

In the bar, having his first beer in two months, Clay Sewap of the Cree Nation men's tandem canoe team told me, "If that river is 740 kilometres long, I wanted to quit 739 times." To the question of what ultimately keeps the paddlers going, the answers were a variation on a theme. "The will to finish," Sewap told me. Another women's tandem team simply said, "the human spirit."

In the end, I think the Yukon itself, that huge frontier landscape, its eternal vastness resisting every paddle stroke, is the ineffable reason why. **V**

## ON THE WEB

yukonriverquest.com  
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BY BRADLEY BRUNN

# the easy rider

THE EASY RIDER IS BACK. THE NEW MOVIE IS A REMAKE OF THE 1969 ORIGINAL. THE STORY IS ABOUT A GROUP OF BOYS WHO GO ON A ROAD TRIP TO FIND A GIRL WHO HAS MOVED AWAY. THE MOVIE IS A REMAKE OF THE 1969 ORIGINAL. THE STORY IS ABOUT A GROUP OF BOYS WHO GO ON A ROAD TRIP TO FIND A GIRL WHO HAS MOVED AWAY.





# R.O.G.U.E.'s gallery

Science teacher tests laws of physics on his skateboard



TUCK AND ROLL >> Nick Breton leads Perné Ignacio (Costa Rica) and Ivan Nguyen (Vancouver) in a heat at Danger Bay 8.

By day he's a high school math and sciences teacher. But in his free time, Nick Breton dons full body leathers and a face helmet and skateboards downhill at speeds topping out at over 100 kilometres per hour.

In just four seasons, Breton, 24, has taken podiums in Alberta and placed well at major Canadian competitions like Danger Bay (where he tied for 17th this year) and the Vernon DH (10th in 2008). In 2008, he earned a world ranking of 45th overall on the International Gravity Sports Association World Cup circuit in Europe. Still, his students were skeptical. "At first they didn't believe me, so I showed them a picture. They

**The injury tally—one chipped tooth, over 20 stitches to his face and a couple pins in his thumb—effectively ending his racing season.**

said, 'well, that could be anyone behind that helmet,' he laughs.

Breton is also a co-founder of Edmonton's R.O.G.U.E. race, the long-distance skateboarding race taking place this August 22–23 (along with the accompany-

ing High Level Downhill). Yet for the second time in the race's three-year history, Breton won't be competing.

During downtime at the Paskapoo Rodeo (an annual Calgary race), Breton and some friends were out for a casual ride when he went down hard while cruising a concrete drainage ditch. "There was a fairly large roll-in where you could get a lot of speed and we were taking fast lines," he recalls.

"On the opposite wall there was a two-foot wide outflow tunnel and I wanted to see if I could go up and over it. I did it once, first try ... then I did it again with my helmet cam. I cleared the outflow fine but on the way down there were expansion gaps. I hit one and it stopped my board immediately."

He dropped to his knees but his momentum as he hit the flats threw him face first onto the concrete. The injury tally—one chipped tooth, over 20 stitches to his face and a couple pins in his thumb—effectively ending his racing season.

But Breton is taking it in stride. "It's nice to see how you rack up ... but it's not the be all, end all of skateboarding," he says. "At World Cup-sanctioned races, it's hurry up and wait. There's so much red tape. If you're out just to skateboard and have fun, the whole bureaucracy can get annoying."

On the other hand, "Canadian races are like nothing else," he says. Most races here run random elimination heats of four to six riders, he explains, so it's not as onerous as individual time trials. And it's more exciting for racers and spectators.

For Breton, though, what counts are long open stretches of pavement and a good community of riders. "Closing off an entire road is gold to us," says Breton. "We just want to get out and skateboard."

This was the genesis of R.O.G.U.E. "We wanted to get together with friends and do a little race," he says. "Other long-boarders refer to [Edmontonians] as flatlanders, so we thought, 'What can us flatlanders do?' The answer: a long distance push race spanning 20 kilometres of Edmonton's river valley trails. "It's a different kind of race—a multi-discipline race. You have to be good at all aspects of boarding to win."

With a \$1000 cash prize and a custom board for first place, this year's race promises to be the biggest yet. Most of the competitors, though, won't be there for the cash. "I don't know anyone who can make a living off racing," says Breton. "This isn't something we do for money."

If Breton's students are any indicator, nor for the fame. **V**

## The follow up: Cody Canning

After featuring Cody Canning in our June issue, the Team Alberta cyclist went on to win a bronze medal at the National Cross Country Mountain Bike Championships in St. Felicien, QC, on July 12.

## ON THE WEB

1. [paskapoo.com](http://paskapoo.com)  
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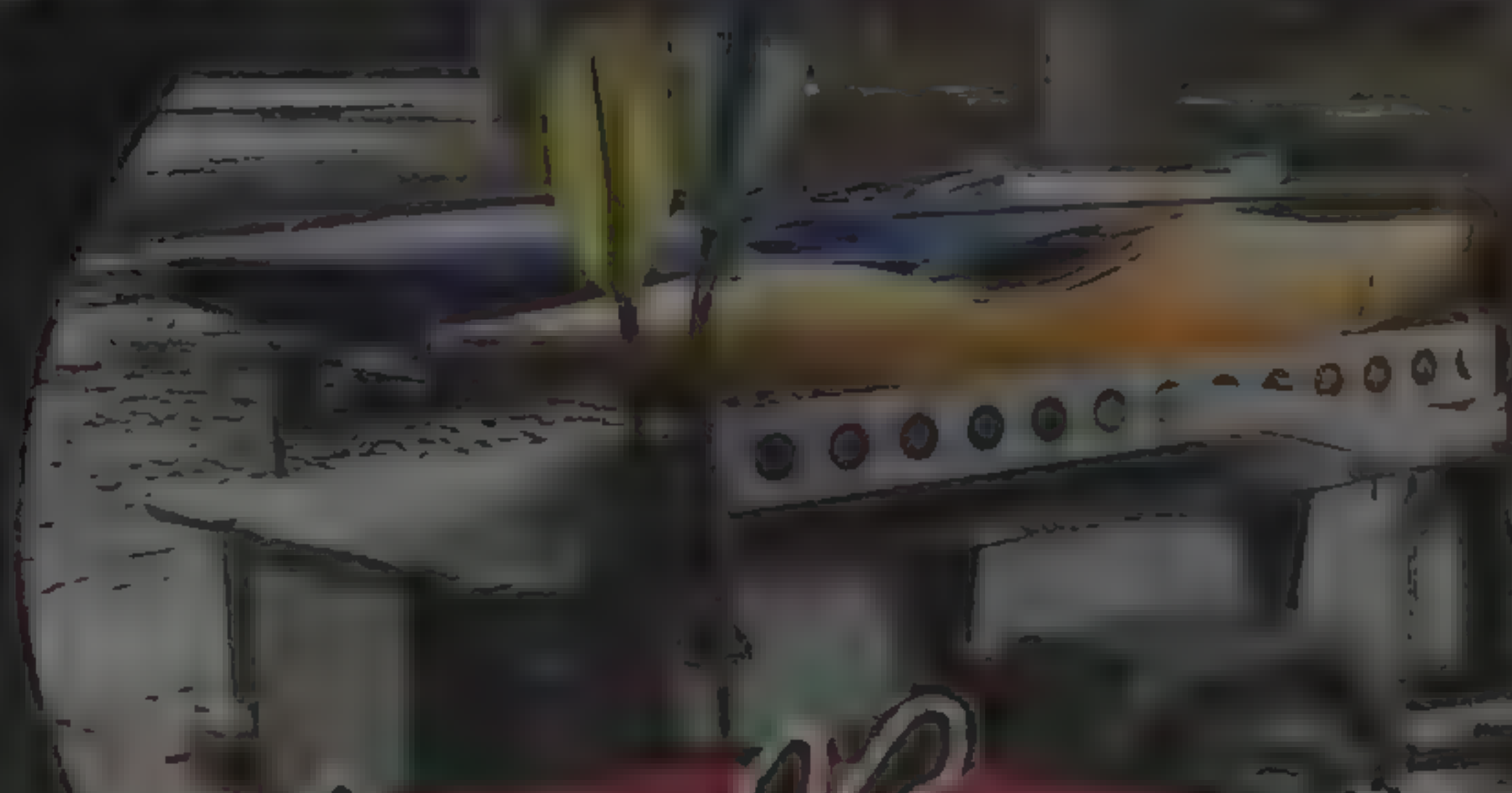






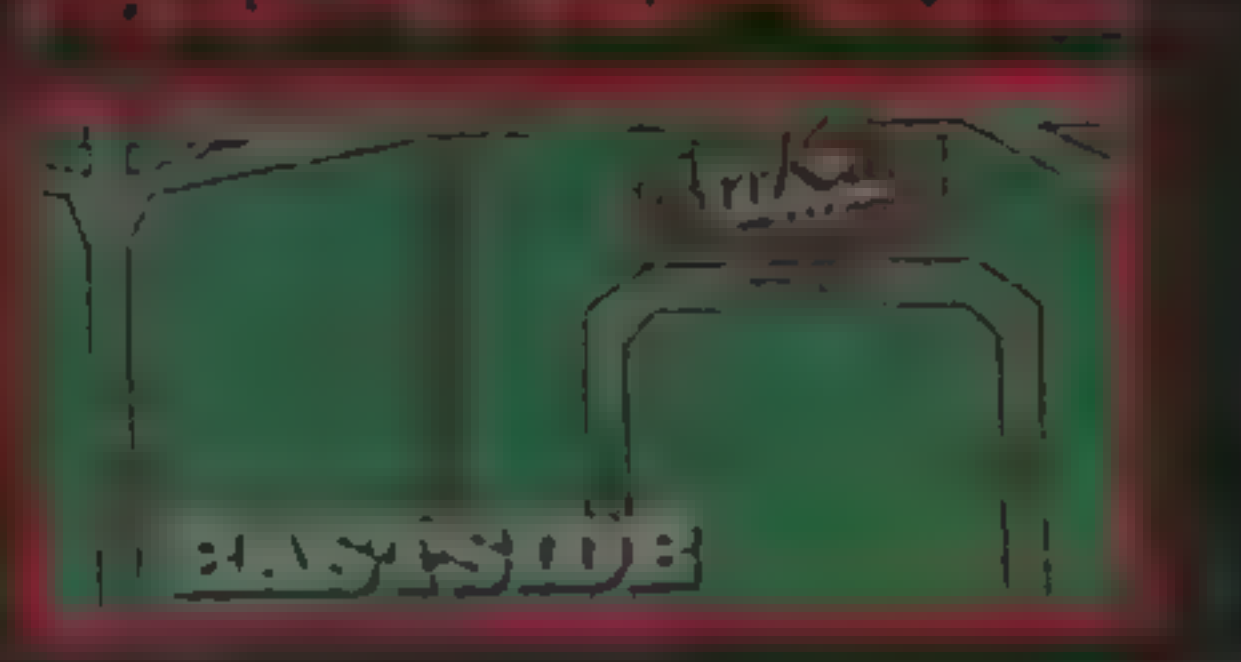
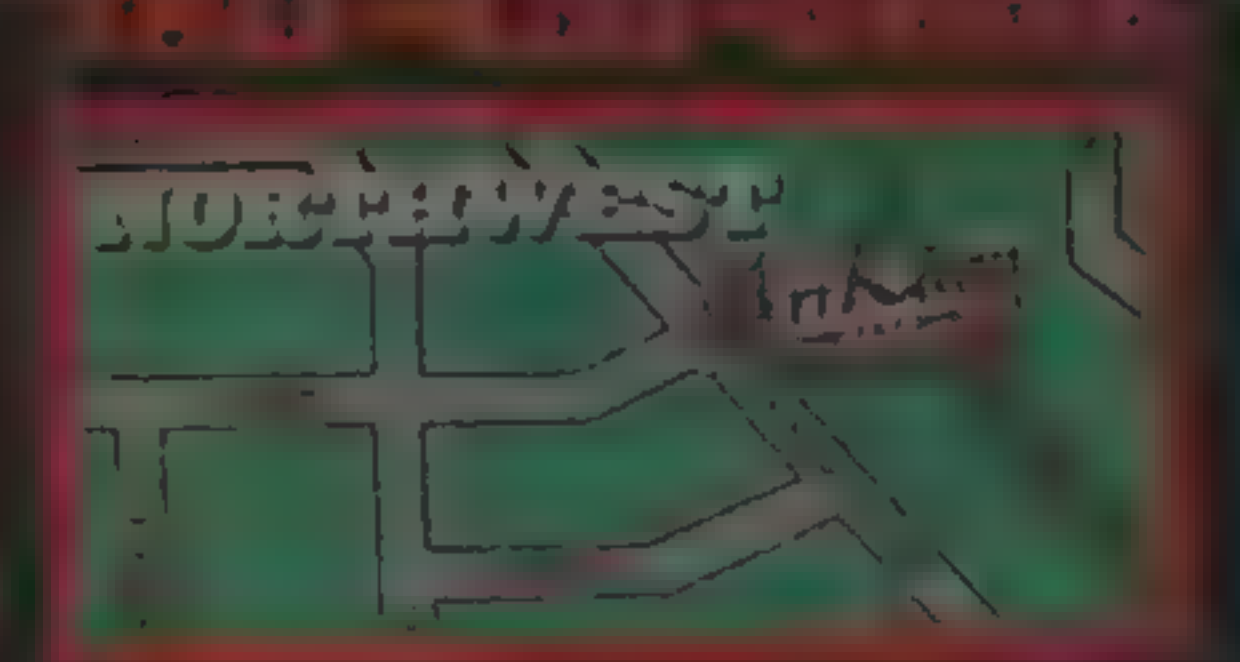
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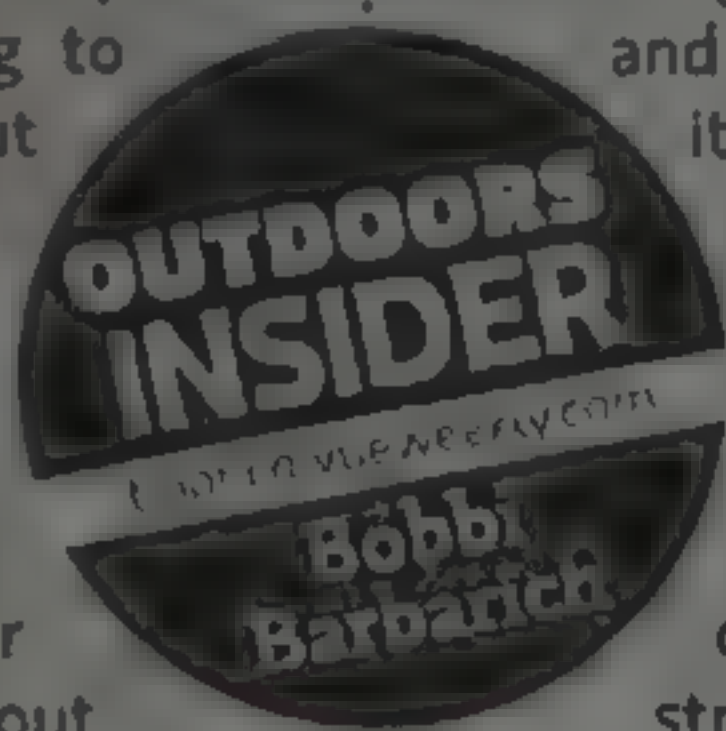
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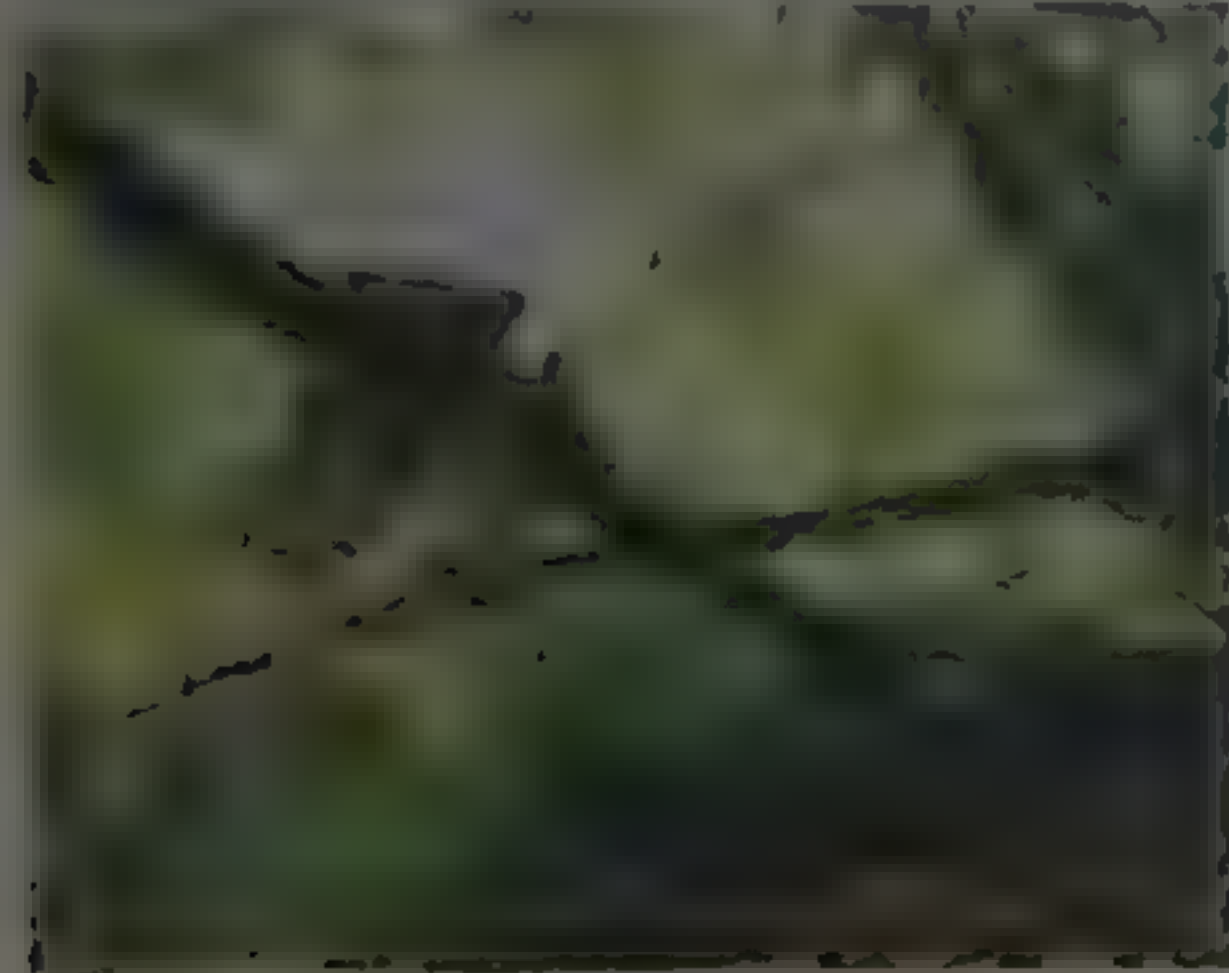
# Scavenger hunt

North Shore, tire swings and other obscurities

Earlier this summer, a group of mountain bikers enjoyed a post-ride pint on the Empress patio. Listening to them talk animatedly about their ride and a technical trail feature hidden in the woods, I was intrigued. I figured there have to be more than a few places where creative bikers or hikers have left their mark on our trails. So I set out to find what my eavesdrop subjects were so excited about and then discover more on my own.



## OVER YOUR HEAD



Going only from the mysteriously clipped phrases I'd overheard—"bushwhacking creek crossings ... four little bridges" and " ... chain link fence"—I head east from my downtown apartment. After 20 minutes, I ride directly into reeds along

the river, trying to whack them away but taking most of them in the chest and arms. I cross a creek twice as it bends into the river and find a narrow singletrack along a chain link fence. I sense I may be on the right path.

The track turns steep and several handmade bridges cross crevices and small streams leading to the river. Turning away from the fence the trail turns steep and roots, mud and rocks complicate the climb. Near the end, mosquitoes attack in the moist, tree-sheltered area. As I continue, a slightly ominous feeling prickles my nerves—like people have been here, albeit rarely.

In the darkest nether reaches at the river's eastern bend, a gnarly narrow wooden ladder bridge spans 50 metres or more. Built between trees, some sections lay dilapidated on the high bank overlooking the North Saskatchewan. Several segments are still held two or three metres above ground between trees, North Shore style.

The coolest feature however, is a two-metre drop built off the main bridge. I ride below it twice before noticing the trail widening is actually the landing from the drop. Elated by my first success, I snap a few photos before continuing west

## THINGS THAT GO BUMP

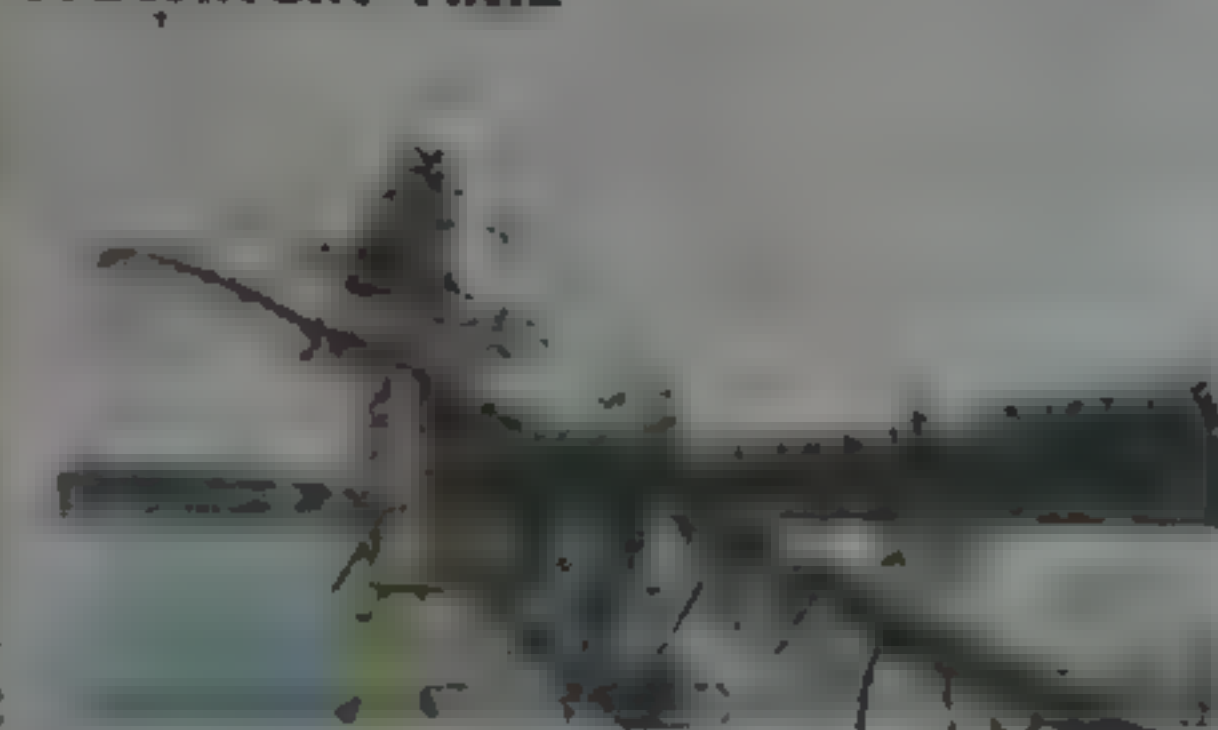


In a clearing under the shadows of birch and poplar, within earshot of the water treatment plant, I stumble upon a network of sculpted dirt jumps. The circuit is approached from east or west; singletrack trails lead directly into the simple park.

Any number of trick combinations is possible, however—several modest drops could be ramps with enough speed, or a moderate technical rhythm section. The track turns back on itself via a berm to hit the jumps in the opposite direction.

Late afternoon light penetrates the trees surrounding this bicycle playground on the edge of a gradual horseshoe bend in the river. Judging from the fresh tire tracks, I bet young BMXers or intrepid cross country cyclists frequently use the area near several campsites and a shelter.

## A SWINGIN' TIME



While running in the trails near Keilor road several weeks ago, I stumbled upon an old acquaintance hiking his bike up from the river. He told me he had just passed a rope swing. With two successes down, I head in the direction I think it may be.

In recent years, significant portions of the riverbank have succumbed to the river's relentless wearing on the bank. Where the river turns south then west again, grey-white clay lies exposed and baked hard in the sun. The slide has pushed the bank's arbor coverage into the river current or left it on the mangled cliffs above.

Near an outfall below four power lines, a singletrack runs close to the river, at times on the sandy riverbed itself. Two spruce trees, their roots weakened by erosion, have fallen onto each other to form a triangle with the bank.

On one, several ladder rungs are nailed to the trunk. From the top of the other, a rope with a knotted end dangles near the river surface—a perfect tree swing.

While my little mission is accomplished, I'm betting there are several other spots where the trail turns into something more exciting. Just listen—that's Edmonton's river valley for you. ▽

## MONT-SAINTE-ANNE

<< CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21

guide, who waits for me before I come bombing down the next treacherous sections he's nicknamed the flying zone and the bridge zone. After attempting and conquering several jumps and narrow slippery bridges, I realize I'm in it until the end. Arriving at the bottom once again, muddled but without bruises or broken bones, I decide it's time to learn more by watching.

As the downhill races begin, I follow the trail up the mountain to catch riders at various vantage points. They whiz by at unknown speeds, sitting back and effortlessly absorbing terrain changes with their bodies. One unlucky rider hits the dirt with a loud thump right in front of me. He quickly gets up and continues on toward the finish line.

At the finish I overhear a female rider laughing off the topple that resulted in her last place finish. One racer, J.D. Swanguen from San Diego, tells me how he hit a rock with his chain guard, locking up his chain and causing him to fly over his handle bar some 200 metres in the opposite direction from his bike. Picking up his bike afterward, he carried it down to the finish line, handlebar and frame in separate pieces.

The guy smiles and says, "I'm happy to be alive." After a day of bikes, mountains and music, still intact myself, I had to agree. ▽

## ON THE WEB

montsainteanne2010.com

## DIVE // CANMORE

# Going in cold

Drysuits, glacial caves—definitely not the tropics

CARLA WALKER

Icy blue water reflects snowcapped mountain tops as I snap my mask in place, waddle over to the edge—weighted down by my scuba gear and my newly acquired drysuit—and start resolutely into the frigid glacial lake.

As the cold penetrates even the thick, air cushioned layers beneath the drysuit, I can't stop a slight gasp. My friends are muffling their laughter. Given my aversion to cold, they were incredulous when I'd suggested getting drysuit certification. As an advanced open water diver I have plenty of experience, but most of it has taken place in the tropics.

However, if you want to dive in Canada, you will come into contact with a drysuit sooner or later and I wanted to be prepared. So here we are standing on the shore of **Spray Lakes, Canmore**, looking (and sounding, as we breathe into our regulators) like a bunch of auditioning Darth Vaders.

The 88-kilometre-long stretch of lakes hosts a dam that generates power for the town, some 400 metres below. It is also the starting point for some great mountain biking and hiking trails, and skiing at the nearby Canmore Nordic Centre.

It is not a warm day, maybe 15 degrees. Our instructor, Dave Hartley, is a seasoned dive expert with more than 3000 dives under his belt, the majority in a drysuit. As the owner/



BLUE LIGHT SPECIAL >> Cave diving helps train drysuit buoyancy // FILE

operator of Mountain Tide Aquatics, he's taught diving in Alberta for more than five years.

Drysuit immersion is a very different experience and requires delicacy since one must account for an extra pocket of air. I now have 18 kilograms of extra weight in my BCD to ensure that with the dry suit, and the five layers underneath, I will still sink. As we enter the water, trapped air is pushed up into our arms and upper body. Hartley instructs us to crouch down in the water

and pull open the rubber seal at the neckline to release it.

For our first dive, we simply get used to the feel of a drysuit, maintaining an average depth of about five metres. The shallow depth is good, as with this new pocket of air a few of us inevitably pop back up to the surface. Staying shallow saves us from getting the dreaded bends.

Drysuit diving is a strange feeling and I have difficulty mastering my buoyancy with this new pocket of air surrounding

me. Back on shore, one of my friends is still grinning, obviously amused at the sound of my teeth rattling like a set of Spanish castanets.

"This was your idea," he reminds me slyly. I ignore him as I yank the rubber neck of the drysuit over my head and take a good chunk of my hair with it. We put our gear away for the day as Hartley gives us a brief prologue of our cave dive experience scheduled for the next day.

A specialty in cave diving requires a significant amount of equipment. However, we are only doing a brief cave penetration at a maximum depth of seven metres, so we do not need any additional special equipment. Working with your drysuit in a cave is a good way to get a feel for your buoyancy, explains Hartley.

The cave is approximately one kilometre in length, flooded to the top with glacial cold water. Hartley informs us there is a strong current we must fight in order to get into the cave, and that it is narrow inside. We will go down in pairs. He hands us flashlights as we gear up and head into the water. My dive buddies descend. I adjust my mask and follow them down.

The visibility leaves much to be desired as we kick up some silt from the lake's floor. We wait together at the mouth of the cave for the dust to settle. Then we start into the cave, crawling along the bottom, hanging onto the

rocks as we fight the current.

Our flashlights don't provide much light. Soon we are in almost complete blackness, the faint, eerie, turquoise glow of the opening providing a soft haze of illumination. As I struggle to keep hold of the rock, I look up to see the flash of a camera. I shine my light at Hartley and give him a thumbs-up. My mask, which has been giving me problems all morning, fills with water. I clear it quickly but not before getting a good dose of water up the nose.

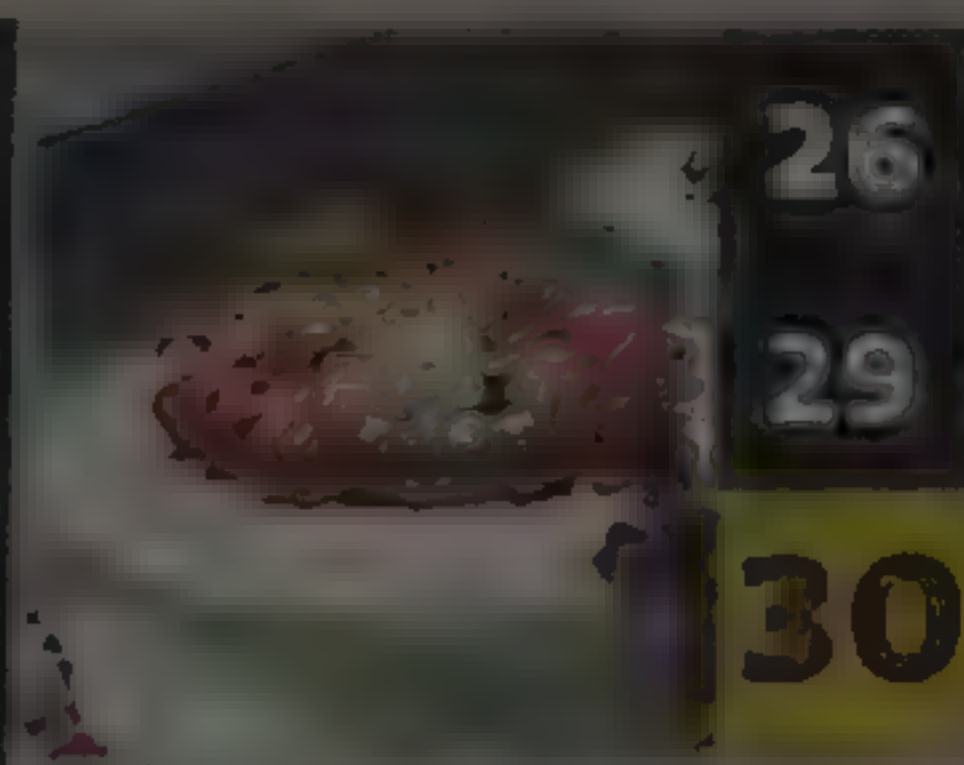
The small resident trout are swimming around us curiously, but I can only see the shadow of their silhouette in the quick beam of my flashlight before us. As I struggle against the Herculean current, I suspect the cave does not appreciate our visit. As Hartley flashes away, I lose my grip on the rock and am swept by the current. The cave spits me out and I surface, once again clearing water from my flooding mask.

Despite the issues I am having with my mask, I take another trip into the cave, mostly for the chance to ride the current back out again. Cold, but very pleased with myself, I sit in the van holding my hands against the heat. Next stop: diving in the Arctic, where we will dive with the walrus. ▽

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COVER // BRING YOUR OWN FRINGE

# Actors be doin' it for themselves

Once an afterthought, Bring-Your-Own Venues are changing the face of the Edmonton Fringe

PAULINA MYTHRUSH

Change has historically been an idea that gets a little battered at the Edmonton International Fringe Theatre Festival. Just two years ago we saw the massive uproar regarding the introduction of computerized ticketing. There were threats of a boycott—people worried that the fan camaraderie in the line-ups and the atmosphere on the grounds would be lost.

Both audiences and artists seem loathe to accept anything defying Fringe tradition, and though this year's "Stage A Revolution" theme might feel like just another wonky title (remember "The Big Kahuna"? yeesh), the set-up of the 2009 festival is unprecedented in Edmonton Fringe history.

This year, Bring-Your-Own Venues (BYOVs) stretch as far north as the Avenue Theatre on 118 Avenue, and east to La Cité Francophone on 86 Avenue and 91 Street. At 18 sites, the BYOVs also outnumber the official Fringe venues, and with 46 BYOV productions to match the 107 lottery shows, this year's Fringe is seeing the largest independently produced participation ever.

For first-timers, a BYOV is a performance space produced and maintained by artists with the co-operation of venue owners; usually it's a bar or church, someplace where a stage, seating and lighting can be easily wrangled. While most Fringe shows enter a lottery for their shot at getting into a fully outfitted and tech-supported festival venue, a show wanting to appear at a BYOV pays a flat fee, around \$400, to be included in the Fringe's program and ticketing service. BYOV shows have to take care of all the incidentals—like technicians and lighting—all by themselves.

When Judy Lawrence coined the term in 1992, BYOVs were originally conceived for very different reasons.

"Back in the day when Edmonton first introduced its BYOV situation, it was for site-specific work. So if my play was about a serial killer who lives in a train tunnel, I'd say I want to do my play in a train tunnel. It was very artist driven," explains Fringe veteran Chris Craddock, who's been successfully working the national Fringe circuit this summer with his show *Moving Along* (you can see his electro-chair set up at BYOV Q, Wunderbar). "What started to happen was people would not get in through the lottery, so they would try to make up good, sort of artistic-sounding justifications for why they should be in a BYOV."

"More time passed and it was clear what everyone was doing," Craddock says, noting the continued BYOV success of some companies like Guys In Disguise, who have annually returned



// Robert Malling

to the same venue (the bar now known as Lucky 13) for a number of years.

With a huge number of lottery applications and about a 30 percent chance of winning a spot, some local theatre companies now circumvent the lottery and look directly to BYOVs to guarantee their place in the Fringe. Plus, at a BYOV, a show has more control over their set-up and scheduling, while slots won in the official lottery share their stages and schedule with up to nine other shows.

"The pros are pretty good," says Mostly Water Theatre's Matt Stanton, whose company is returning to Filthy McNasty's (BYOV N) to mount *WetWare* this year. "You do the same show every single night, or whenever you want, actually. That's way better than having to deal with a Tuesday at noon show, so everyone can still work," he says, adding that being a theatre artist often means keeping a day job, too.

In the past, BYOVs have usually been within walking distance of the central Fringe grounds. Now they're seeing further expansion to developing areas of town.

"I think it's good for the Fringe itself, because it opens up a whole other audience," says Scott Peters, who is pro-

ducing his show, *Songs From the Ave*, up at the Avenue Theatre. "Personally, I didn't do the BYOV here on the avenue necessarily for the Fringe people, I did this for people who live on the avenue and don't go to the Fringe."

"At the bottom of this, what we're trying to do is simply facilitate an artist being able to do something," says Fringe Executive Director Julian Mayne. "Scott came to us and said, 'Do you guys care if we set up a BYOV at the Avenue Theatre?' My reaction is, 'No, of course not.' I think that would be really exiting for the 118 Avenue community, and I think it's exiting for the festival because it's extending out amongst the city," says Mayne. One might even hope that the Fringe's influence may foster growth on 118 Ave as it has on Whyte over the past 20 years.

"I don't really have any strong feelings about wanting to contain it within Old Strathcona," says Mayne. "I don't think our job is to contain things. If it's a good show and it's a BYOV across town, people will go there. That's certainly what I saw with *The Anime Show* at New City last year. It was really well attended downtown. I think that goes back to the audience, I don't think they make the distinction between venues." (New City

on Jasper Ave returns as a BYOV this year too, with Connie Lingua's *Rocky Horror Show*.)

"People could argue it back and forth," says Craddock. "For me, I would still prefer to just be in the festival. I'll go ahead and do that noon show, it'll be no problem!" he laughs, noting that he arranged his BYOV in Edmonton only after he'd won most of his national tour by lottery. "What was I going to do," he says, "skip my hometown?"

Along with the city-wide expansion, the strong local arts contingent leaning toward BYOVs has meant a pretty revolutionary programming shift.

"In the past the BYOVs probably would have housed one company. What's happening now is that people are finding a venue and a whole bunch of companies are being part of the venue. That kind of started last year with the change that happened at the Varscona," explains Mayne. Last summer, the Varscona opted out of the official Fringe programming and instead entered the festival as a BYOV. The theatre presented a handful of fan favourites like *Rapid Fire* and *Die-Nasty*, and also marked the celebrated return of Teatro la Quindicina to festival grounds. This year, along with the Varscona, the Strathcona Library and La Cité Francophone are also running under the independently-produced banner, presenting six to nine shows each as BYOVs. In the scheduling sense, these stages are not all that different from the lotteried venue set-up. The difference is in how the shows are selected.

"We're sort of overflow parking for Fringe shows, too," explains former Fringe Festival Director David Cheoros, who is producing the Library BYOV. "Some of us [producers] are also interested in trying to create an identity for a space and looking for shows that go along with that. You look for ones that connect with the library conceptually—shows that have either a literary connection or tell stories or are based in history or non-fiction," he says, explaining that this sort of thematic programming is not exactly new to Fringe culture.

"What we're seeing over the last few years is a major step closer to the Edinburgh Fringe model where, although the festival itself is unjuried, there are extremely active producers who are seeking out work that they think is appropriate to their audience," Cheoros says, adding that the Scottish granddaddy of all Fringes also evolved into a city-wide event a long time ago.

"What I'm seeing is that there seems to be a desire for the local theatre community to ensure they have a place in the festival and they do not want to rely

on the lottery system any longer," says Mayne. "We were very disappointed last year to lose the Varscona as a lottery venue, but it's kind of a double-edged sword because we were also very excited to still have Stewart Lemoine's work being done at the festival."

"I think in some ways it is better for the lottery," says Craddock. "These are people who Fringe professionally, like myself. They're going to be in the Fringe anyway, and they're going to get the support they're going to get. That support, if it is indeed finite, is going to be siphoned off from more emerging artists on which the Fringe is founded. This is what every Fringer is up against. This is what I was up against when I started, because David Belke and Stewart Lemoine were already a decade in before I ever wrote my first Fringe play."

"The artists that are creating these curated BYOVs have been involved with the Fringe from the very beginning, people like Ken Brown [who's producing the La Cité BYOV] and all of these grandfathers of the festival," says Mayne, adding that at 28 years in, the idea of the Fringe is bound to evolve. "We have to be very attentive to tradition and we have to be very attentive to change. We would never want to lose the core of it being in Strathcona. We would never want to lose the lottery venues because that is the real sort of socialist, uncensored part of this festival—that's what makes it unique amongst any other festival. But I don't think that we should stifle the creativity and the opportunities if artists want to use that."

"The festival's job is to ensure that we can still find venues that will allow the lottery people to be part of it," Mayne notes. "Otherwise what will end up happening is it will become a very localized festival, because it's very difficult for the internationals and nationals to become part of the BYOVs."

As for what the expanding BYOV system means to ticket-buyers, audiences themselves have nothing to lose.

"In terms of the quality of the Fringe festival artistically, it means only good things," says Craddock. "It means some of the most talented artists in the whole country are giving it away for \$10 a ticket. It means the Fringe is a very democratic place to see theatre." **V**

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# Little red book

Vue offers a guide to staging your own revolution

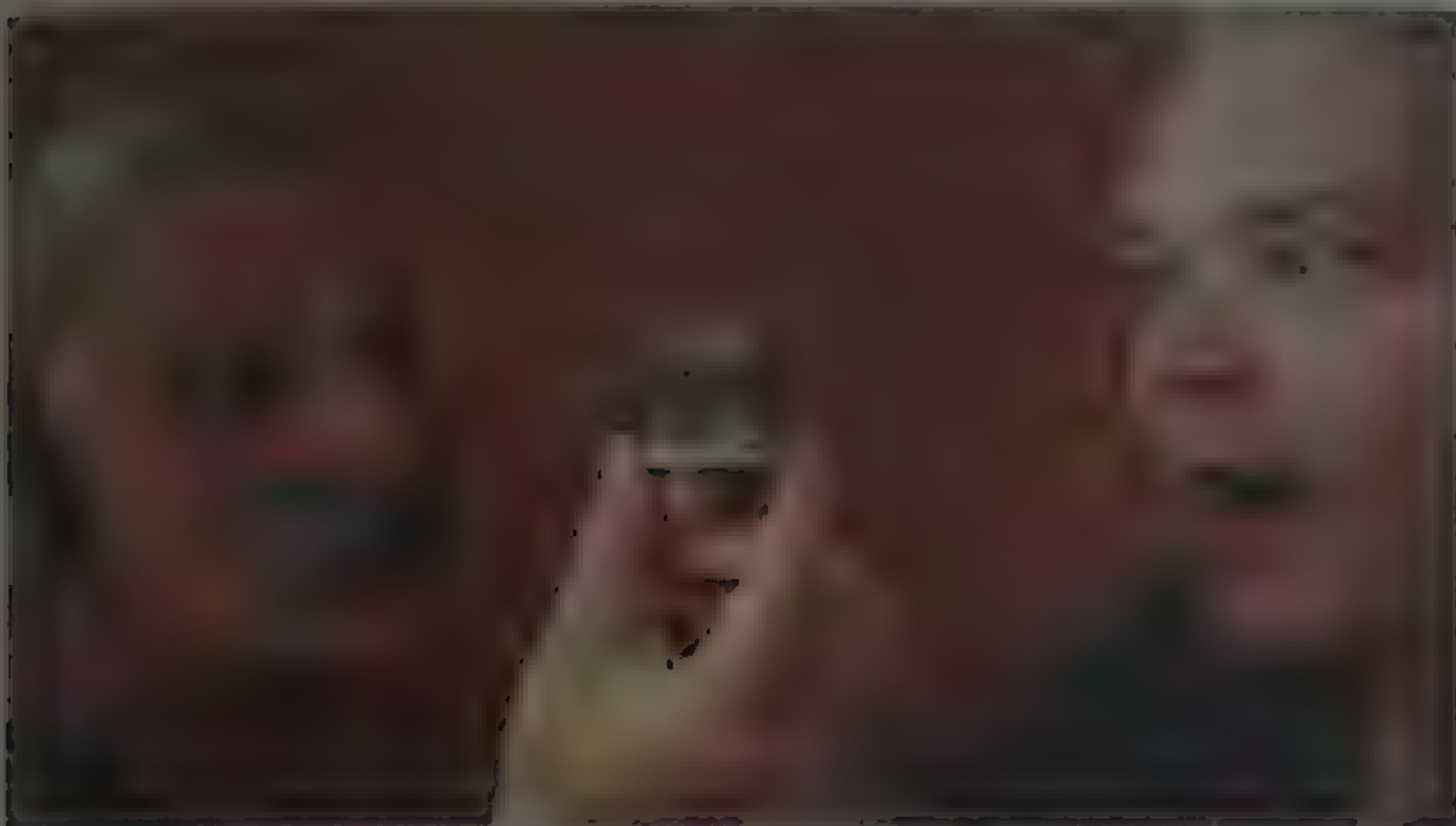
DAVID BERRY

VIEWER'S CHOICE

PAUL BLINOV

VIEWER'S CHOICE

Though help will eventually come in the form of reviews (be sure to check out [vueweekly.com](http://vueweekly.com) all weekend for up-to-the-minute reviews), making choices for the first Fringe weekend can be a tough



Jack and Jill Deconstruct // Supplied

task. In the interest of helping you out, a pair of Vue's theatre critics offer a few safe bets from some of our local favourites.

## Jack and Jill Deconstruct Stage 10 (Planet Ze Design Centre)

Nursery rhymes like "Jack & Jill" are ingrained into every child's mind (heck, just reading that probably brought the melody to mind), but System Theatre's out to show us we never really knew them at all. A darker take on children's fare, *Jack and Jill Deconstruct* sounds ready to pounce on those dark little undertones and toss off lines that imply something far more sinister lurking beneath the innocent melodies of childhood lullabies. Oh, and hey, they're promising a giant puppet fight. Things like that are why I go to theatre in the first place. **PB**

## LoveHateKill

BYOV P (Varscona Theatre)

It's an Edmonton-playwright gumbo: co-penned by a number of Edmonton playwrights, ranging from the established (Stewart Lemoine) to the relatively new (BFA grad Kirsten Rasmussen) *LoveHateKill* is dark comedy from a multiplicity of voices—all under the banner of Pony Productions, a company that's been putting on inspired works for a while now. Predictions: Somebody's gonna love. Somebody's gonna hate. Somebody's gonna die. **P**

## Mockingbird Close

Stage 1 (TransAlta Stage, Westbury Theatre)

I don't know much about Cacophonous Collective, the company putting on *Mockingbird Close*. But I do know that the script's one of my favourites of recent years (created by Northern Light Theatre AD David Shindler), and that this production features Gaby Porter, a quietly talented local actress, out on one half of a pair of sublimely poignant who lose their child and set out on a journey to suburban cul de sac to ask

the neighbours. It's a rich and, in capable hands, immensely magical work. **PB**

## Molly

Stage 8 (Old Strathcona Performing Arts Centre)

Covenant Theatre doesn't have a long history, but it's impressive nonetheless. Their mainstage debut, *King-*

## Skirmishes

BYOV P (Varscona Theatre)

Blarney Productions has made their name on Wayne Paquette's stellar direction of sober-minded, serious drama, from their referential debut *Afterplay* to last year's amnesiac *A Body of Water*. So the dark comedy of *Skirmishes*, about two sisters who reunite over their mother's death-bed, is a bit of a stretch. Luckily, Paquette has employed two of Edmonton's finest comedienne, Coralie Cairns and Davina Stewart, to navigate the relationship. And Paquette doesn't have all those Sterling awards and nominations for nothing. **DB**

## Support Ho's

Stage 9 (Telus Building)

As the sexy romp *Spring Alibi* and the football-centric *True Grid* proved, Linda Wood Edwards takes on the travails of middle age with a rare honesty and a down-to-



Support Ho's // Supplied

earth sense of humour. *Support Ho's*, about a group of women striving to hold on to their weekly kibitz session, seems like it's right in her wheelhouse. Tack on a quality cast—Linda Grass and Rebecca Star are the highlights—and let Eileen Sproule direct, and you have a perfect recipe for simple, sweet, Albertan comedy. **DB**

## Moving Along

BYOV Q (Wunderbar)

Chris Craddock's no stranger to theatrical successes—he's fresh from an off-Broadway run of gay rap opera *BASH'd*, and another show he penned,



LoveHateKill // Supplied

*PornStar*, also gets a run at this year's Fringe. But *Moving Along*, his revamped, semi-autobiographical one man show might be something special, even for him: featuring Craddock in a chair hardwired with the controls to the lighting which surrounds him, allowing twitchy tilts through characters and voices, he barrels through stories of relationships both good and bad at a speedy pace. Oh, and if the YouTube commercial Craddock made for the show is to be believed, *Moving Along's* received five-star reviews from every Fringe reviewer who's seen it. **PB**

## Wedding Ruiner

BYOV T (Cook County Saloon)

Mark Stubbings must have something against societal institutions. His latest, *Wedding Ruiner*, is probably his best work since *Dust*, the Alberta Playwrighting Competition-winner about life at a funeral home. Following the life of a woman who's taken it upon herself to destroy the matrimonial "bliss" of folks that someone has decided really shouldn't get hitched in the first place. Filled with Stubbings' less-than-optimistic view of humanity, it's a comic

# Revenge of the nerds

Mostly Water Theatre are still rising the only way they know how—geekily



I GET WET >> Mostly Water tackles a subject close to their geeky hearts with this year's *WetWare* // Mostly Water Theatre

## FAWNDA MITHRISH

// FAWNDA@VUEWEEKLY.COM

Our town boasts a long line of comedic greats—think SCTV, Leslie Nielsen and the legacy of *Die-Nasty*. The guys in Mostly Water Theatre might seem like the newest sketch-com kids on the block, but they're quickly getting noticed as those funny, geeky guys who like to slap Craig Buchert around.

Buch (Bük), as he is lovingly referred to by Matt Stanton and Sam Varteniuk, is one of the troupe's biggest cheerleaders. Since they teamed up in 2005 for their first Christmas show, Mostly Water has been lapping up experience with *The Irrelevant Show* on CBC, making guest appearances around town, and racking up hits on YouTube. It was total bromance at first sight, explains Varteniuk, when he and Trent Wilkie met up to work with Stanton and Buchert in late '05.

"We had a bit of a man-crush on each other and it turned into a man-date," Varteniuk says. Earlier this summer, the group was nominated for a Canadian Comedy Award for a sketch they wrote for *The Irrelevant Show*. While there are worries they'll get "Stelmached" by the split vote (the show was nominated twice in the same category), Stanton admits their work with CBC paid off. Plus, that was where they met Peter Brown, who's directing them at the Fringe in *WetWare*.

With all the nifty stuff going on for MWT, it's no surprise that the Fringe programmers asked the guys to help out with hosting duties at the fest. Along with hosting the opening ceremonies, the troupe came up with an interactive YouTube game based on the choose-your-own-adventure format to promote the Fringe (check 'em at [mostlywatertheatre.com](http://mostlywatertheatre.com)).

"They mentioned that they wanted something like a viral video—which is funny because you can't make something viral," says Stanton, who was largely responsible for the choose-your-own-Fringe-adventure schematic. "I think the most important thing to me was to get the feeling of the Fringe."

"It was about finding the goal posts of the Fringe, the shared experiences. The green onion cakes, the beer tents, the buskers," adds Varteniuk. Just like the books from pre-teenhood,

the viewer navigates his way through the Fringe grounds, and the videos give you options at every turn. In one, you're faced with a crying clown who's lost his castmate minutes before his show. The options are to either yell at the clown, or help him out. We won't spoil the endings for you, but being a good sport in the videos does pay off. "From the numbers of views on the videos hardly anyone yells at the clown," Stanton says (um, does that make me a bad person?).

Following the success of last year's *1UP*, which was themed on gaming culture, MWT's Fringe production this year is about tech trends that are happening across every demographic. "WetWare has to do with the Internet and technology and the future of where it's going, about people's dependence on texting and cellphones. We look at everything from things that we're dealing with now to what happens 200 years from now when Prime Minister Ben Mulroney makes it mandatory to have biological body enhancements," explains Varteniuk.

Humans relating with technology is a theme that has resonated for years. Remember how every comedian in the late '80s kept whining about how darned difficult it was to program the VCR? Now, we're faced with everyday frustrations like GPS navigation and surfing the Net via Blackberry. What makes the theme special for MWT is that they're part of a faction of society that happen to be pretty savvy with these devices, and they proudly hold their heads high in the ever-growing genre of geek comedy.

"We are geeks. We have to sort of take ownership of it," says Varteniuk. "I don't know what high school was like for you, but it got a lot better when I stopped caring about what other people thought. We think we're pretty cool. And our moms think we're pretty cool." **V**

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# The Next-next step

Nextfest provides a crucial testing ground for neophyte Fringers

PAUL KLINGOV

Thumb through this year's Fringe program, and a number of play titles may strike the theatre-savvy with a sense of déjà vu. It's not the brain playing tricks: titles like *@life* and *Unsolicited Mail* have already run at another Edmonton theatre festival: Nextfest.

That emerging artist festival has cultivated plenty of talent over the last 14 years, but emerging artists do need somewhere to emerge to, and the Fringe is an obvious, immediate choice: by my count there's five shows going from Nextfest to the Fringe this year, (the two mentioned above, plus *A Watched Pot Never Boiles*, *El Dorado* and *Letters to Noce*). There may even be more, but that sounds about right for the yearly average to Nextfest curator Steve Pirot.

"I think six is probably a pretty good median number for the number [of Nextfest shows] that go on to the Fringe every year when you include readings, and even shows that may have made an appearance at Nextfest from previous years," he says. He's happy about it too: a show's potential post-Nextfest life is something Pirot has in mind when selecting which works to make it into the festival each year.

"I'm always looking for the big picture: not just, is this script something that I'm interested in, but is this artist someone that I'm interested in, is this project tied into a bigger scheme, whether it's being involved with something like *Teens@the Turn*, or it's going to be a touring show for children that some other theatre company might be doing," Pirot continues. "Or, if I know that a show is going to be going to the Fringe, or is going to be doing a tour of the Fringes, I'll quite often approach people, the playwrights in particular, and say, 'Use Nextfest as an opportunity to build your production towards its ongoing life.'"

Pirot tries to prop up artists as much as possible, in part by taking care of the little things that younger artists may not yet know how to deal with or have access



INTO THE GREAT BLUE YONDER >> Arlen Konopaki and Amy Shostak are two of a handful of artists making the leap from Nextfest to the Fringe with their show *A Watched Pot Never Boiles* // Meryl Smith-Lawton

to on their own: Pirot handles the marketing and provides a team of technical and dramaturgical supporters for each show. Plus, after 14 years, Nextfest has a returning audience of its own, so emerging work is going to be seen by somebody, even if a particular show marks an artist's first crack at acting, directing or writing. Pirot adds that Nextfest provides the all-important deadline, which forces a script through to a completed draft, and gives it live-fire run in front of a paying audi-

ence. And it's a model that's proven quite successful for developing more than just one-run scripts in the past.

"I would say that way back in 2000 [is] where we really started to see what Nextfest could do in terms of supporting productions, as opposed to supporting the development of scripts, but to actually developing a production," he says, mentioning that year's *Tuesdays and Sundays*—a play which has since toured internationally and drummed

up its share of awards—as one that formed, as a full show, at Nextfest.

"That show was done around the world, but first at the Edmonton Fringe and at other Fringes and other international festivals. But it wasn't just the script that was done, it was the Nextfest production that carried on."

That same support isn't nearly as present at the Fringe, where a much more competitive atmosphere leaves the responsibility of finding an audience squarely on the shoulders of the performing artists. Performer Amy Shostak is certainly aware of the differences: involved in two former Nextfest shows this year, she directed *Letters to Noce* (which was one of Nextfest's first-ever hold-over shows) and co-created the one-year-older *A Watched Pot Never Boiles* (pronounced boy-lays), with Arlen Konopaki, here running as a revamped remount. She's found the support Nextfest provided an invaluable safety net when it came to taking chances with her work.

"At Nextfest, even if you take a big risk with creating something, there are lots of people there to support you," she explains the evening after a Boyle rehearsal. "If your risk is a bad idea, people will definitely tell you: like if you have a dramaturg, or even Steve will say 'I think you guys should change this,' whereas at the Fringe, it's definitely risky financially to put up something you don't have any backing behind I guess, [or] any creative confidence in."

"Of course, at the Fringe, unless you have a huge budget for some reason, that's not really necessarily as possible to have that kind of support," she adds. Shostak's had to do a bit of streamlining to get her shows Fringe-ready, cutting down on props in Boyle, without a Nextfest designer to help make them all, while *Noce*, a last-minute addition to the Fringe, had to cut about 10 minutes to fit into its slot and adapt to a new space. But both shows saw acclaim at their respective Nextfests, a potentially important boost: as much as Nextfest provides more support, a Fringe performance, with a few good reviews to pull in a crowd, can get a show seen by a significantly larger audience.

The problem is, again, filling those seats: the Fringe is about trying to

showcase to as large a crowd as possible, not cultivating green talent.

Joel Crichton, a four-time Fringe vet whose one-man show *El Dorado* had a spot at this year's Fringe confirmed before it got into Nextfest, is aware of the sway a review can hold. Though reviews do come out for Nextfest, he doesn't see them as holding nearly as much sway as they do for Fringe goers, who scan the "best of" picks of the newspapers to try and get the most bang for their Fringe buck.

"In the Fringe, if you look in the *Journal*, they have that column that's like five star shows. Four and a half star shows. And people look at the five star shows and go, 'These ones are sold out I'll go to these ones.' And they go to the four and a half star shows."

"Nextfest, being an emerging artist festival, has a different sort of expectation: people know that you're starting out and you're doing what you can and this might be your first crack at it," he continues. "So it's a much safer environment than the Fringe, where you're in direct competition with 120 other shows, and you're basically doing everything you can to get people to come to it, and praying to fate that you get good reviews, and you get them early."

The Nextfest boost, then, be it good buzz, professional dramaturgy or just the experience of performing for a supportive audience, can be pretty vital for younger artists going up against older, out-of-town, or already-established Fringers. But the jump from Nextfest to the Fringe isn't one way, necessarily, while the festival is submission based, Pirot doesn't mind combing the Fringe to find potential Nextfesters too.

"Because Nextfest is a curated event, and because I'm mostly doing things by submission, there can be an opportunity for the programmer to be passive and just wait for people to present things to me," he says. "I'd rather be out turning over stones and finding out who people are who may not have Nextfest on their radar. And the ones that do have it on their radar, the Fringe is a great place for me to educate myself about who the next wave of creators are, and what they might be doing that they might not necessarily be telling me about."

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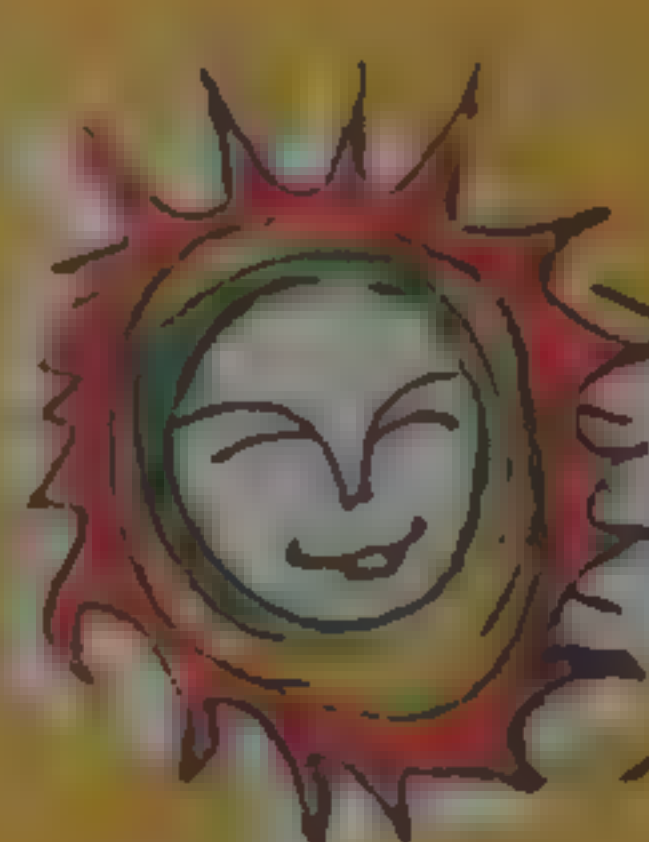
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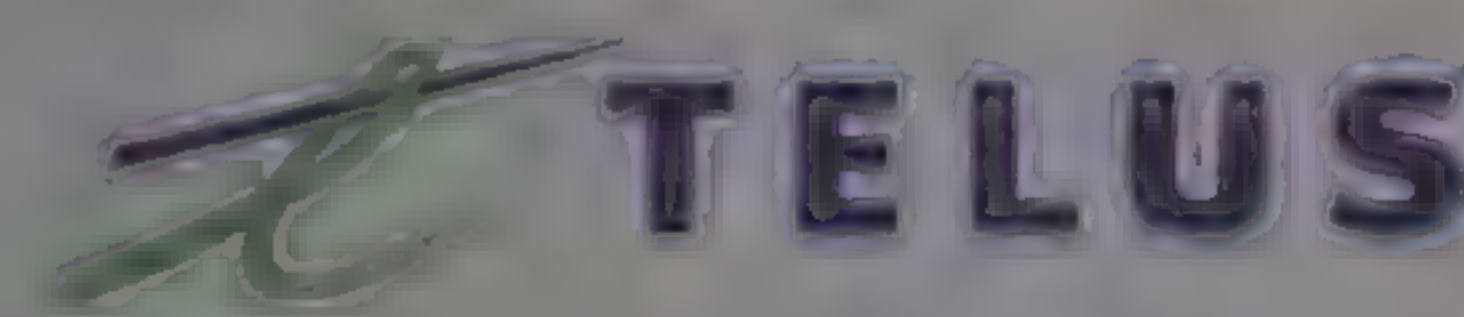
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# Senselessness and sensibility

Castellanos Moya provides a crucial window into Latin America

An unnamed writer arrives in an unnamed Latin American country to copyedit 1100 pages of testimony taken from the survivors of atrocities committed against indigenous communities by their own military forces. Overseen by the Catholic Church and a small legion of international human rights workers, the incendiary report awaits only this final polish from the foreign writer before being made public. The writer's job, as he sees it, is to "make sure that the Catholic hands about to touch the balls of the military tiger were clean and had even gotten a manicure ... ." The writer, recently slandered in his own country for politically correct misinterpretations of critiques he made of his country's president in a national newspaper, has taken the work for essentially cynical reasons. He's here for the remittance and to escape an unpleasant situation, and it behooves him to approach his work dispassionately.

Yet the writer immediately finds himself marveling at the primitive poeticisms of the Cakchiquel Indians who describe their trauma in curious phrases such as "I am not complete in the mind." The writer jots down several such phrases in his personal notebook and even commits them to memory, repeating them to everyone he meets. However, he also finds himself tormented by the sheer horror of what he's charged with reading and revising, the steady, massive and dark waves of torture, rape and mutilation remembered by witnesses, one of whom even suggests that it is only with the forgetting the names of the victims that they will finally rest in peace.

The writer turns to drinking and cultivating sexual encounters to provide a balm to his agitated mind. His crudity and crassness with regards to the women he seeks to seduce makes a striking, blackly comic contrast to the ostensible solemnity of his task. Reading about violence perpetrated against human flesh only seems to make him crave more contact with human flesh, preferably when it covers a body roughly

akin to that of Demi Moore. The contrast between the unimaginable suffering of many and the festering, petty, carnal obsessions of one might cause the reader to find kinship between Horacio Castellanos Moya's *Senselessness* (New Directions, \$17.50) and numerous novels by Martin Amis. But Castellanos Moya's prose in this, his first novel to be translated into English, by Katherine Silver, isn't quite as merrily misanthropic as Amis, bless his black heart, can often seem. As the writer's paranoia balloons to terrifying proportions over the course of his work, as he realizes that the memories he's being exposed to can't be shut out through fleeting and typically less-than-satisfying pleasures; as he begins to acknowledge the titular senselessness of the supposed identification that he, a well-fed writer, feels with the impoverished survivors of massacres, to the point of appropriating their words to express his own feelings, Castellanos Moya imbues his protagonist—who bears more than a few similarities with his creator—with a certain sympathy. Who among us is capable of fully digesting, of making any sense of, stories of abysmal slaughter?

The prose style of *Senselessness* is actually most in keeping with that of Thomas Bernhard, especially its long, fluid sentences, which read not as leisurely digressions or opportunities for pedantry but rather as anxiety-riddled bursts of compulsive extrapolations from a guy on the verge of totally losing his shit. Written in the warts-and-all first person, *Senselessness'* rambling sentences give a vivid sense of a protagonist utterly overwhelmed, tense as a wire designed to asphyxiate, with every period punching into the page like a drowning man coming up for air. The evocation of burgeoning madness can probably be most accurately aligned to Gogol or Kafka—whom we can also trace in the novel's dichotomy of bureaucratic abstraction and looming threat of genuine violence. The short, sharp finale has the effect of remind-

ing us that terror cannot be confined to the frontiers of the third world.

In a sly bit of self-referral, there's a moment in *Senselessness* when the writer, already beginning to feel less than complete in the mind, declares his new goal of "not wallowing in any of the testimonies that I would never turn into a novel, because nobody in his right mind would be interested in writing or publishing or reading yet another novel about murdered indigenous peoples ... ." Well, so much for that idea. But Castellanos Moya's contribution to this genre, if we can call it that, is hardly a work of unbridled bathos and hand wringing. It doesn't pretend to contain in any neat fashion the atrocities the writer reads about (which are presumably modeled after similar crimes committed in Guatemala). In fact, *Senselessness* is about our inability to do precisely this, no matter what our proximity is to the events in question.

Castellanos Moya's own proximity to atrocity has fluctuated vertiginously. Born in Honduras in 1957 but raised in El Salvador, he has been a citizen of Guatemala, Canada, Costa Rica, Spain, Germany and Mexico, where he spent 12 years as a journalist and political analyst. He now lives in Pittsburgh, living in exile as part of the City of Asylum Project. In a recent interview he stated his intense distaste with being identified as a political novelist, though he admits that his earliest memory is of a bombing that destroyed the porch of his grandparents' house back when his grandfather was the president of a nationalist party and conspiring to oust a liberal government, so perhaps politics is something he would be incapable of excising from his work if he wanted to. In any case his is another vagabond and unsentimental voice from Latin American literature that the rest of us would do well to listen to. As we stand back and try to comprehend the chaos that continues to unfold in the rest of the Americas, Castellanos Moya can help us to decipher not only the experiences of those who live there, but of us too, in our watching. ♡



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# Something more than ornamental

Lyndal Osborne's organic constructions liven up Harcourt House

ADAM WALDROP-ELAN  
// ADAMWB@VUEWEEKLY.COM

The first part of Lyndal Osborne's *Ornamenta* that you see on entering the Harcourt House gallery space is "Garden." It feels a little cramped in the freshly de-carpeted front room, with a square garden plot full of upright root systems and white corncobs nestled in a bed of twigs, flanked by a suggestion of a brick wall and some bush or tree-like decorative bundles of straw, and shaded by a loosely hung scrim. Osborne works with a practiced hand, developing a biological aesthetic that we last saw a variant of in Edmonton as part of *Imagining Science* at the AGA, in a piece that was simple but stronger than much of the imported work surrounding it.

"Garden" is a stripped-down version of Osborne's biological aesthetic, from a different branch than the seed bank at the AGA. It's a very simple project: a garden, carefully realized in dried plants. It embraces the tension between our preconceptions of the artificial and natural by emphasizing a grid-like layout, and inverting the materials of the garden, with plants presented roots-up in unusual colours, arranged in a strict grid. The installation as a whole, with a bench in front of, and bundles and wall behind the garden itself, makes landscaping obvious—although I wish we were seeing it in the larger gallery pictured in the binder of press and biographical materials, because the walls of Harcourt's front room are really too close together for this.

The sense of organization is common to much of Osborne's work, including her work in *Imagining Science*, and here in "Garden" it offers a sort of cross-section of her history. The show introduces her as an artist/gardener/biologist, and here we can see how these three categorizations are really



ISLAND PARADISE >> Lyndal Osborne uses plant matter to create landscapes in *Ornamenta* // "Archipelago," Lyndal Osborne

very close to one another. Osborne, more than anything, organizes her subject matter into a grid, a system of categorization not entirely different from the way she describes herself. Sometimes it is simple and logical, and other times it is a jumble of white corn-cob teeth.

The only trouble with "Garden" is that it isn't really anything else. It's very literal, and is unmistakable in its simulation. Osborne highlights a couple of references, but these, from teeth found in her parents' garden to the colours of

Australian plants, are really just elements of the garden's construction, nothing more. It is perhaps a specific, and even a meaningful garden, but it isn't anything else. Plants are plants.

The work in the second, larger room has everything that "Garden" is missing. "Archipelago" is a striking work that very successfully plays with scale and the identity of its component objects to draw us in. A collection of oval objects, themselves made up of dried grapefruits, sunflower stems,

beakers, printed paper and wire, cover the floor, and as we approach them we see that they contain microcosms of themselves, echoes of the whole piece. The vegetation used in their construction, including the grapefruit spheres and more importantly the tiny plants suspended from the wire meshes hovering above the floor-placed cells, cut up just enough to expose their insides, create a quite wonderful fluidity of scale. The plants exist within the work as raw materials, as complete objects which contain

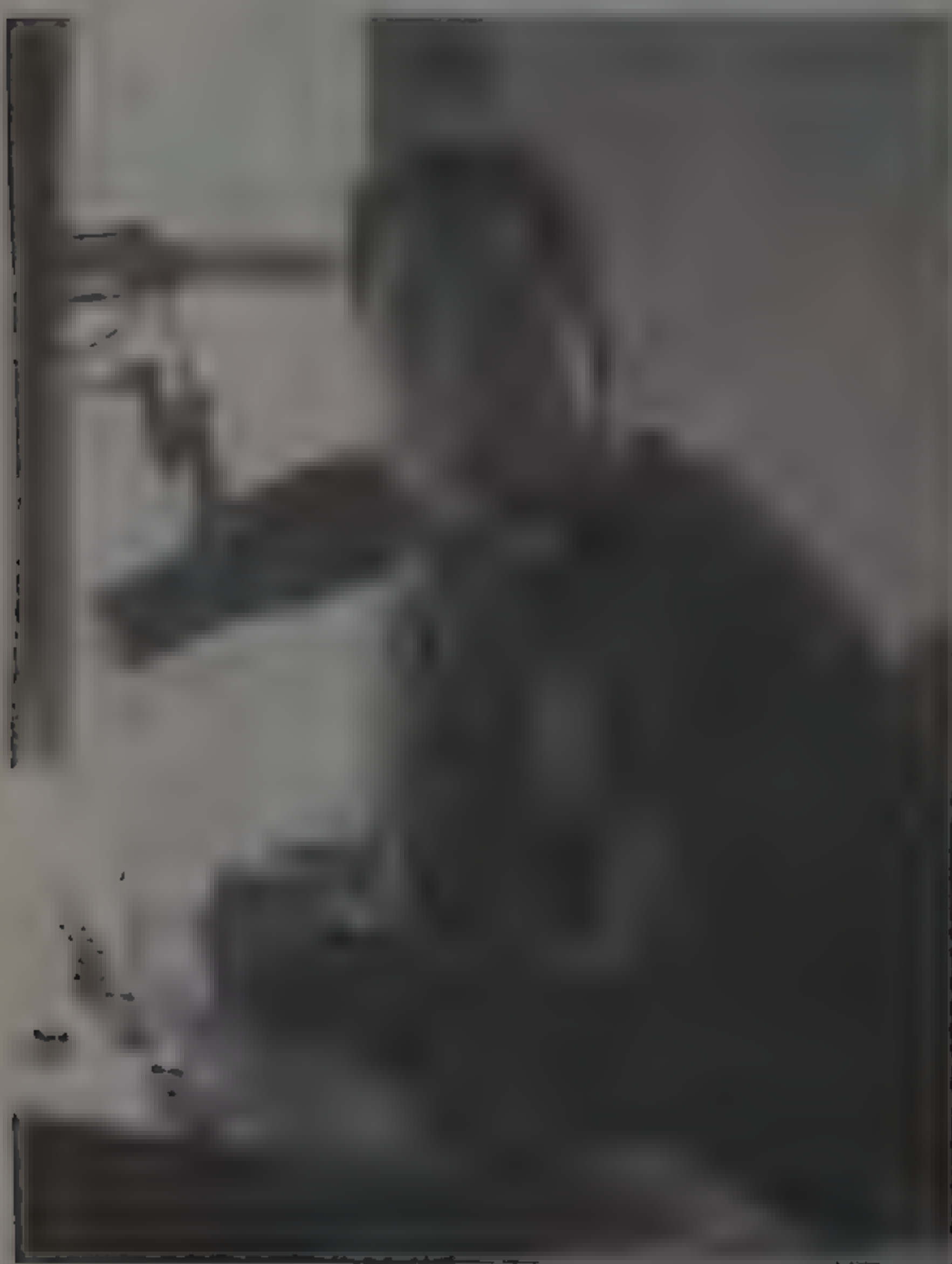
their own cellular structure, and as tiny components or pathogens within cells within organs within the organism of the work as a whole. All of the individual pieces function in several ways, encouraging the viewer to ap-

**“ Archipelago is a striking work that very successfully plays with scale and the identity of its component objects to draw us in.**

proach them all.

My one wish is that "Archipelago" was slightly more rewarding to the kind of really close examination that it seems to cry out for. In some ways it works fantastically: the printed, chine-colléd grapefruit and sunflower pieces are notable, as are the glass beakers and bits of chemistry equipment placed within the islands as cell components in a perfectly restrained and delicate comment on complicated political issues of biological engineering. But aside from these few points, which one notices quite quickly, I found myself slightly unsatisfied, as each island is made up of more-or-less the same stuff. There needs to be a certain amount of uniformity to hold the organism together, but I would have loved to see some more cellular specialization: that would have made me feel justified in bending down by each island to look at the construction—but it speaks to the work's strengths that I could not help but do so. **V**

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John Hammond & The Blues Survivors

and Kenny Zinn

Caddy Carrier & The Bayou Swamp Band

John Ford Doo, Cedric Burnside

& Herman Malcolm

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featuring The Tommy Castro Band

with Magic Dick, Kenny Neal

Deanna Hogan

Boyes, Bill & DeCarosso

David Gogo

Pick Estrin & the Nightcats

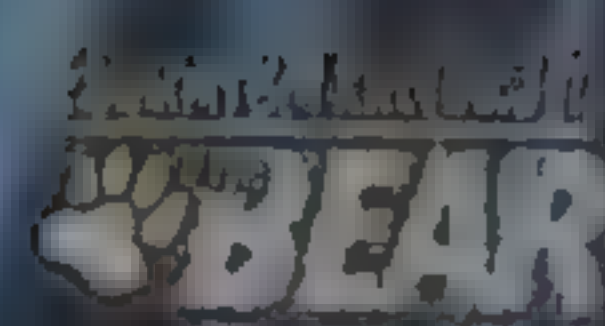
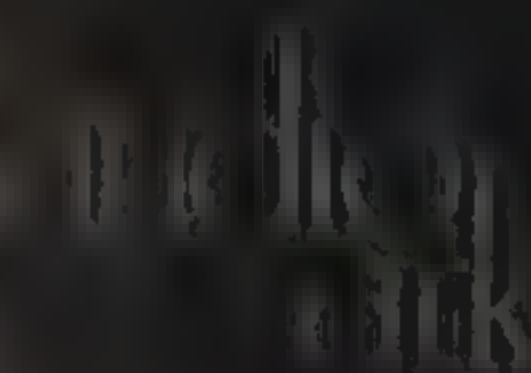
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John Hammond Quartet

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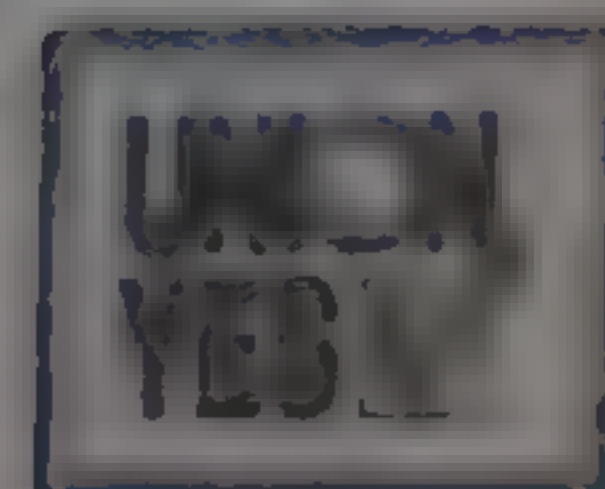
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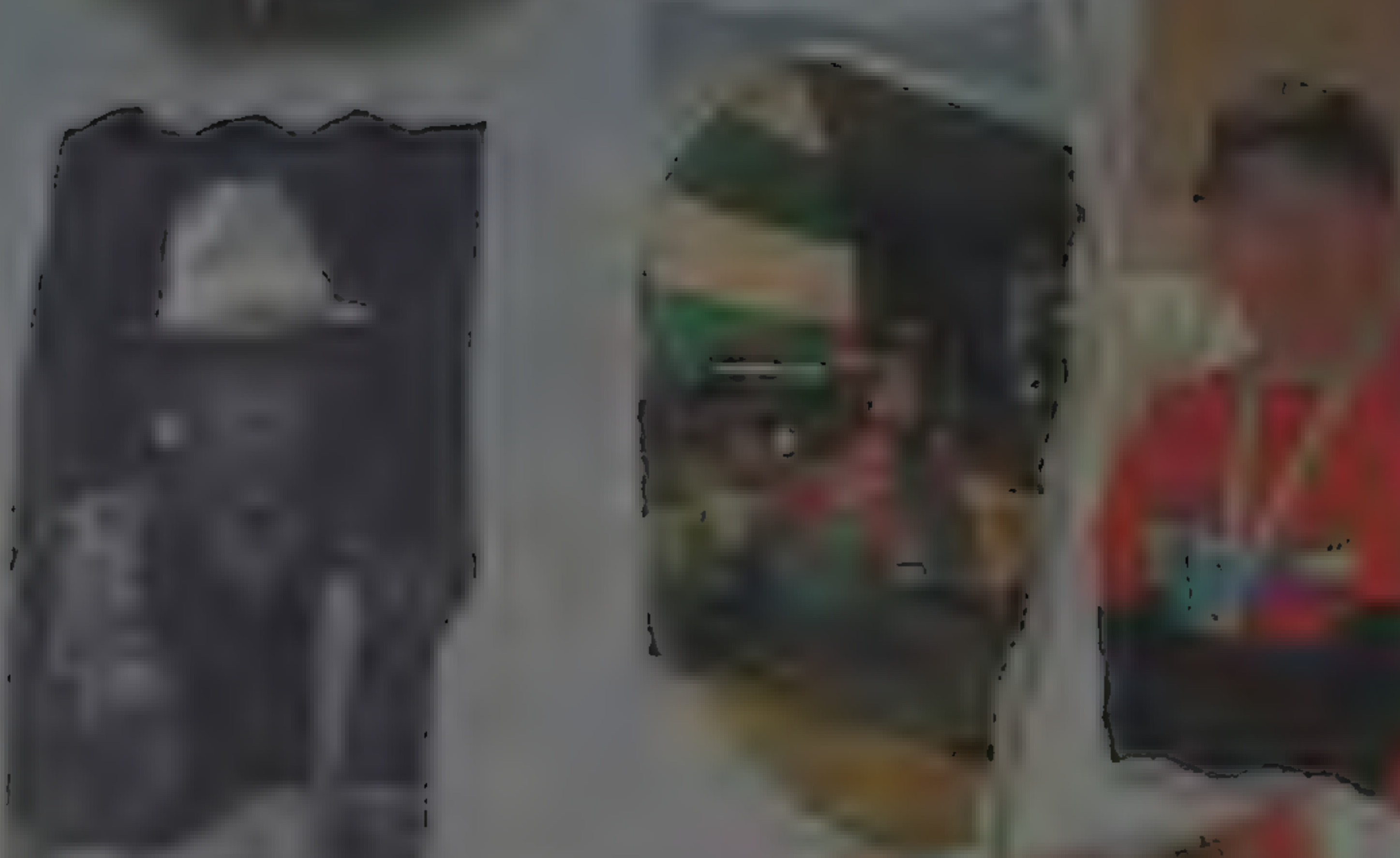




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We have a variety of food vendors, beer and wine service throughout the festival. Gates open at 1100, and manicured lawn for your blanket if you wish. We also have our own "festival" bus. Please ask that you do not bring coolers or tarps, and low back low seat "festival" chairs.

## SCHEDULE

### FRIDAY 21

GATES OPEN 4:30 PM	MUSIC TO 10 PM	Time
Moreland & Arbuckle		5:30 pm
Magic Slim and the Teardrops		7:00 pm
Roomful of Blues		8:30 pm

### SATURDAY 22

GATES OPEN 1 PM	Time
Arsen Shomakhov	
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Juke Joint Duo	
Legendary Rhythms	

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## FRIDAY 22

Artist	Time
.....	2:30 pm
.....	4:00 pm
.....	5:30 pm
.....	7:00 pm
.....	8:30 pm

## SUNDAY 23

Artist	Time
Boyes, Brill & DelGrosso.....	2:30 pm
David Gogo.....	4:00 pm
Rick Estrin & the Nightcats.....	5:30 pm
Sista Monica Parker.....	7:00 pm
John Hammond Quartet.....	8:30 pm

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# Nothing on the line

The eccentrics that populate *Fishing for Bacon* provide only surface-level allure



## fishing for bacon

By Michael Davie

**GONE FISHIN'** >> Michael Davie relies too much on quirk in debut novel *Fishing for Bacon* // NeWest Press

SUE HARP

Love is a uniquely isolating yet shared experience, eternally haunting, eluding our grasp, defying logical analysis, bucking any rational examination, only guaranteed to bring heartbreak, and yet universally yearned for. As part of NeWest Press's Nunatak First Fiction Series, which publishes debut efforts from writers, Michael Davie presents *Fishing for Bacon*, a novel from the perspective of Bacon Sobelowski. Raised in isolated small-town Alberta by a mother and grandmother who seem only tangentially aware of his existence, Bacon is living the summer of his 18th year in a quest for his special someone in Davie's *Fishing for Bacon*.

Born in Bellevue, nestled just off the Crowsnest Trail highway in Southern Alberta, Bacon doesn't grow up with much in the way of gumption or ambition. In fact, it seems that before his summer of discovery, Bacon didn't do much maturing at all. Life seems to be one big inadvertent mess, disarrayed further by the introduction of love and sex at the end of his senior year in high school. Though how Bacon ever has the courage to pursue love is somewhat of a mystery, due to his mother's continual disparagement of the concept combined with her incessant vocalization of the belief that Bacon has to stay away from girls because they'll make him into a man, and men are pigs.

It's a natural response from a character traded in by her man for a younger model, but it doesn't lead to a healthy mentality in Bacon. Fortunately, to balance out the negativity of his mother, Bacon also has his grandmother to turn to, Grandma Magic Can, who smokes thisle out of a Fanta can just like Kenny Rogers apparently does. While Grandma Magic Can was also unsuccessful in securing lasting love with her own husband, she at least remembers that there are sweet parts of love that everyone should have a taste of, including Bacon. Unfortunately, like most people, Bacon seems singularly gifted at making bad life and love choices. But Bacon perseveres; he doesn't give up on love, even

as he struggles with the contrary influences of four very different women over the course of his summer.

Throughout the novel *Bacon* frequently goes spincast fishing to relax and gain perspective on his life. Thus the title of the book is quite literal, as the most epiphany-inducing moments for Bacon occur when his closed-face reel is in his hand. Spincasting is also

**Though Davie's writing is finely tuned and runs smoothly, lending an air of ease to reading the novel, the chronic underdevelopment of characters drains believability.**

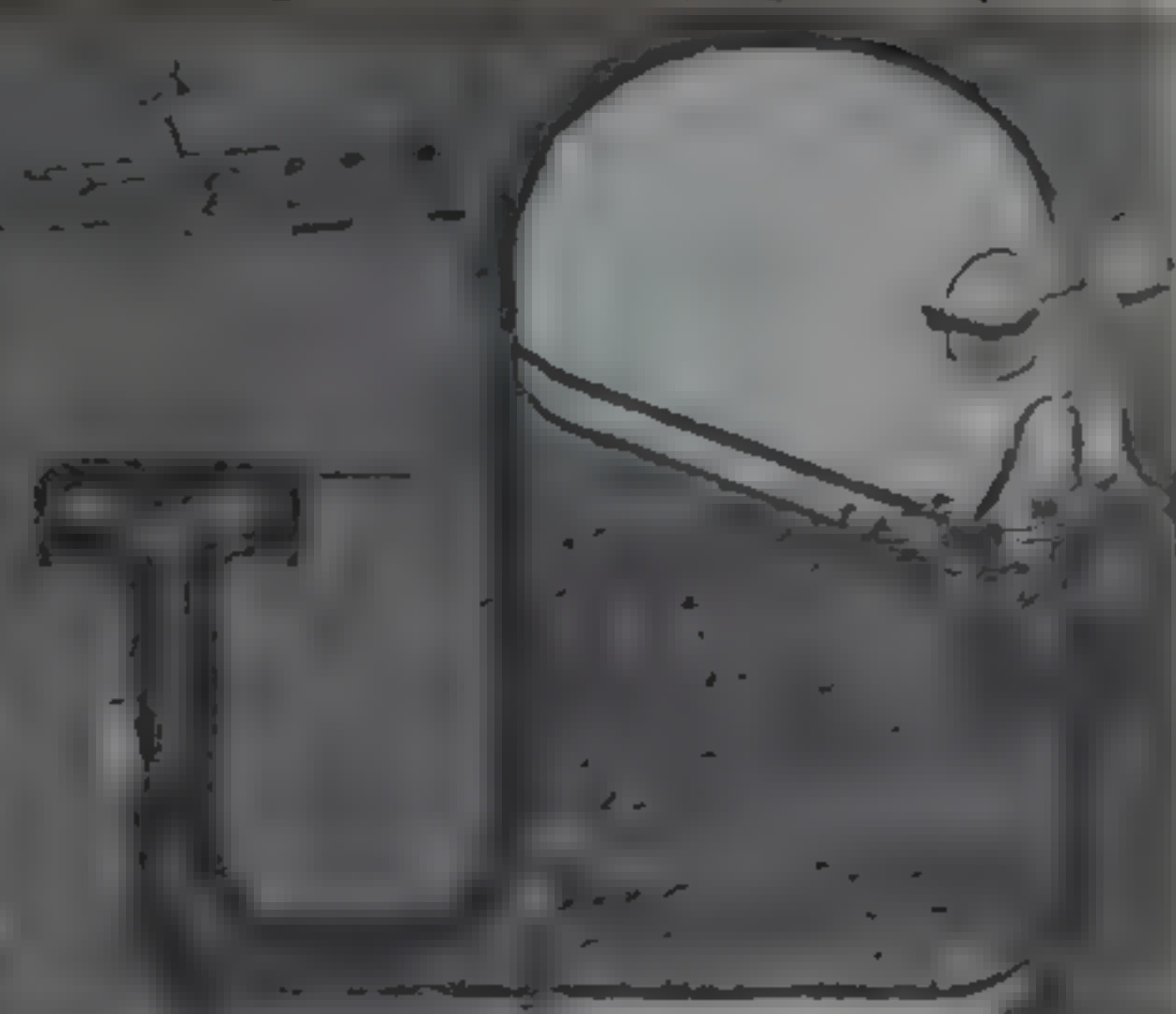
another way Bacon is identified as a misfit, since fly fishermen apparently scorn the spincasting rod. But most everyone is a misfit in this novel as eccentricity is the prevailing character trait.

Which leads me to my underlying qualm about this novel, that I just didn't believe in many of the characters. Sure, eccentricity is entertaining and colourful, but without the inducement of pathos, many of the characters, especially Bacon, are reduced to caricatures and stock-types. Though Davie's writing is finely tuned and runs smoothly, lending an air of ease to reading the novel, the chronic underdevelopment of characters drains believability. Bacon is a comic novel, and deeply penetrating psychological analysis isn't exactly what one would wish writing of this nature to use, but the result is a feeling that the reader is skimming the surface of a profound story that would be much more interesting, if only one could get to it. **V**

FISHING FOR BACON  
BY MICHAEL DAVIE  
NEWEST PRESS  
2007

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## FILM

**THE KING OF KONG: A FISTFUL OF QUARTERS** Oliver Building Rear Parking Lot, 10225-100 Ave • The Annual Outdoor Film Screening presented by M.A.D.E., musical entertainment by Joel Harding • Fri, Aug 14, 8pm, film starts at dusk • Free, bring your own chair

## GALLERIES • MUSEUMS

**ALBERTA CRAFT COUNCIL** 10186-106 St, 780.488.6611 • **Discovery Gallery: WALLPAPER:** New sculptural work by emerging glass artist Katrina Brodie; until Sept 12 • **Lower Gallery: HITCHED:** Couples in craft; until Oct 3

**ART BEAT GALLERY** 26 St-Anne St, St-Albert, 780.459.3679 • **LAKES AND TREES:** New paintings by John H. Burrow and Frances Alty-Arscott • Until Aug 15

**ART GALLERY OF ALBERTA** Enterprise Sq, 100, 10230 Jasper Ave, 780.422.6223 • **REAL LIFE:** Ron Mueck (sculptor) and Guy Ben-Ner (video); until Sept 7 • **REALISMS:** Artworks showing various concepts of "Realism" as they appear in the history of art; until Aug 23 • **THE PAINTER AS PRINTMAKER:** Impressionist prints from the National Gallery of Canada; until Aug 23 • **SPEEDING SUBJECT:** RBC New Works Gallery: Mary Joyce's landscape paintings and drawings; until Aug 23 • **A NEW LIGHT:** Canadian Painting After Impressionism: Exploring the influence of Impressionism on Canadian painting in the late 19th and early 20th century. Featuring works from the AGA Collection; until Aug 23 • **Art for Lunch:** Enterprise Square Atrium; Free on the last Thu every month, 12:10-12:50pm • Free (member)/\$10 (adult)/\$7 (senior/student); \$5 (6-12yrs)/free (5yrs and under)/\$20 (family—2 adults, 4 children); Pay-What-You-May, Thu, 4-8pm

**BIGFOOT CONTEMPORARY ART** Red Deer, 4b-5809-51 Ave, Red Deer, 403.343.3933 • **AN ACT OF CHOICE:** A group photography exhibit • Aug 15-Sept 12 • Opening reception: Aug 15, 2-4pm

**CALGARY AND EDMONTON RAILWAY MUSEUM** 10447-86 Ave, 780.433.9739 • Edmonton's first railway station, 1891 • Open Aug-Sept, Tue-Sat, 10am-4pm • \$2 (incl local rail history book)

**CARROT CAFÉ** 9351-118 Ave, 780.471.1580 • Dylan "Toymaker" George, an artist in spaces, sounds, communities, photons; and transformations • Aug 23-24 for Dylan Toymaker's Lantern Workshop: youth (8-17) and adults are welcome to plaster, paint, and papier-mâché • Pre-register

**CENTRE D'ARTS VISUELS DE L'ALBERTA** 9103-95 Ave • **MEETING POINT:** Artworks by Jane Ash Poitras, Art X9, monotypes by Father Douglas, photomontages by Michel Allen • Aug 14-Sept 8 • Opening reception: Aug 14, 7-8:30pm

**CHARLIE BIEGSTROM'S RED GALLERY** 9621-82 Ave, 780.498.1984 • **MYSELF, THE PORTRAIT:** A series of male portraits and other works • Until Aug 30

**COMMON SENSE** 10546-115 St, 780.482.2685, commonsensegallery.com • **A SHOW:** new abstract sculpture by Andrew French • Until Aug 22

**CROOKED POT GALLERY** 4912-51 Ave, Stony Plain, 780.963.9573 • Open Tue-Sat 10am-5pm • Pottery by Jan Hains and Jeanette Wright • Through Aug

**ELECTRUM GALLERY** 12419 Stony Plain Rd, 780.482.1402 • Gold and silver jewellery by Wayne Mackenzie, and artworks by various artists

**FRINGE GALLERY** 10516 Whyte Ave, bsmt of the Paint Spot, 780.432.0240 • Artworks by Mandy

Archibald • Until Aug 28 • Opening reception: Aug 15, 2-4pm, artist in attendance

**GALLERY AT MILNER** Stanley A. Milner Library Main Fl, Sir Winston Churchill Square, 780.496.7030 • **SKIES:** Oil paintings by Debra Hovestad • Until Aug 31

**GALLERY IS—Red Deer** Alexander Way, 5123-48 St, Red Deer, 403.341.4641 • Landscape paintings by Alison Philpotts • Until Aug 19

**GARDEN GALLERY** 10421-85 Ave • **COLLECTIONS:** Artworks by Kirsten Zuk • Sat, Aug 15 2-9pm

**HARCOURT HOUSE GALLERY** 11215-102 St, 780.426.4180 • **ORNAMENTA:** Travelling exhibition, artworks by Lyndal Osborne • Until Aug 29

**HARRIS-WARKE GALLERY—Red Deer** Sunworks, 4924 Ross St, Red Deer, 403.346.8937 • Paintings by Corinne Anderton • Aug 17-Sept 18

**JEFF ALLEN ART GALLERY** Strathcona Place Senior Centre, 10831 University Ave, 780.433.5807 • Open: 11:30am-1pm; 3-4pm • Artworks by artist Joan Chambers • Aug 4-27

**JOHNSON GALLERY** • **Southside:** 7711-85 St, 780.465.6171; New works by Ada Wong, Julie Drew, Ruth Vontobel-Brunner, Audrey Pfannmuller and Daniel Bagan. Blown glass by Sol Maya • **Northside:** 11817-80 St, 780.479.8424; Artworks by Don Sharpe, Jim Painter, Dan Bagan. Historical photographs of Edmonton. Wood carvings by Adie. Pottery by Noboru Kubo

**KAMENA** 5718 Calgary Tr S, 780.944.9497 • Mon-Wed, Fri 10am-6pm; Thu 10am-7pm; Sat 10am-5pm • Artworks by various artists

**KAASA GALLERY** Jubilee Auditorium, 11455-87 Ave • **OPEN PHOTO 2009:** Presented by Visual Arts Alberta • Until Sept 30

**LATITUDE 53** 10248-106 St, 780.423.5353 • **Summer Rooftop Patio Series:** Every Thu 5-9 pm until Aug 13; Krystle dos Santos and Chrome, Late-night on Aug 13 (patio finale until 11pm) • **Main Space: PRIVATE PROPERTY—ACCESS DENIED:** A series of security guards in a site-specific installation by Thomas Kneubuhler (Switzerland); until Sept 5 • **ProjEx Room: ART PARAPHERNALIA FOR A MODERN WORLD:** Stanton's store brings the shopping experience into the gallery, investigating the roles of art and the gallery in society as an emblem of aesthetics, design, lust, desire, wants, needs, and habits; until Sept 5

**LOFT GALLERY** 590 Broadmoor Blvd, Sherwood Park, 780.922.6324 • Open every Thu 5-9pm; Sat 10-4pm • **NEW ART ("ANYTHING GOES")** • Until Aug 29

**MCMULLEN GALLERY** U of A Hospital, 8440-112 St, 780.407.7152 • **NATURAL DESIGNS:** Landscape paintings and abstract photographs by Jim Visser and Wenda Salomons • Until Aug 23

**MCPAG Multicultural Centre Public Art Gallery,** 5411-51 St, Stony Plain, 780.963.2777 • **Wild Excursions:** Travelling exhibition; until Sept 8 • **Dining Room Gallery:** New paintings; Until Sept 17

**MEMORIE CENTRE GLOBAL GALLERY** 10209-97 St • **THIS VILLAGE:** Curated by Shane Golby, art works created by five immigrants to Alberta, Shumba Z. Ash (Zimbabwe), Ljubomir Ilic (Croatia), Pedro Rodriguez De Los Santos (Uruguay), Akiko Taniguchi (Japan), Erika Vela (Peru) • Until Aug 26

**MICHIF CULTURAL AND MÉTIS RESOURCE INSTITUTE** 9 Mission Ave, St. Albert, 780.651.8176 • Aboriginal Veterans Display • Gift Shop • Finger weaving and sash display by Celina Loyer

**MUTTART CONSERVATORY** 9626 - 96A St • 780. 496.8755 • **SERENDIPITY:** Sculpture show • Until Sep 27

**PROFILES PUBLIC ART GALLERY** 19 Perron St, St Albert, 780.460.4310 • **HERS:** Artworks by Izabella Orzelski Konikowski, Bogdan Koralkonikowski • Until Aug 29

**PROVINCIAL ARCHIVES OF ALBERTA** 8555 Roper Rd • 780.427.1750 • culture.alberta.ca/archives • Open Tue - Sat 9 am - 4:30 pm; Wed 9 am - 9 pm • **ALBERTA WOMEN'S INSTITUTES 100 YEARS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE:** Celebrating the contributions of the Alberta Women's Institutes over the last 100 years; Aug 18—Oct 31, 2009; Free admission

**ROYAL ALBERTA MUSEUM** 12845 - 102 Ave • royalalbertamuseum.ca • 780.453.9186 • **WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR:** Photographs featuring a variety of wildlife and their unusual habits • Until Sep 13

**ROYAL ALEX HOSPITAL** Food Court, 10240 Kingsway • Artworks by the members of the Emerging Artist Society of Alberta • Aug 24-Oct 5 • Meet the artists: Thu, Sept 3, 6:30-9pm

**SCOTT GALLERY** 10411-124 St, 780.488.3619 • **PAINTING ROOM:** Artworks by Terry Gaudin, J. Gaudin

line Stcheln, Leslie Poole, Arlene Wasylynych and Brenda Malkinson • Until Aug 18

**SNAP GALLERY** 10309-97 St, 780.423.1492 • **Main Gallery: THE GOLEM PROJECT:** series by Mark Rebholz • **Studio Gallery: Artworks** by Anthea Black, SNAP's Winter Artist in Residence • Until Sept 5

**SPRUCE GROVE ART GALLERY** Melcor Cultural Centre, 35-5 Ave, Spruce Grove, 780.962.0664 • **HORSES:** Sculptures by Rebecca Caron Lienau; until Aug 14 • **Artworks** by Margit Davidson; Aug 17-Sept 5; opening reception: Sat, Aug 22, 1-4pm

**STEPPE GALLERIES** 1253, 1259-91 St • **East Gallery: FABRICATING A FATHER: FURTHER ADVENTURES OF A UNICORN BOY:** Paintings by Travis McEwen; until Aug 31 • To view contact Kelley Bernt at kelle.bernt@bldg-inc.ca

**TELUS WORLD OF SCIENCE** 11211-142 St, 780.452.9100 • **DA VINCI: THE GENIUS:** Until Sept 7 • **IMAX: VAN GOGH: BRUSH WITH GENIUS:** until Sept 7

**URBAN ROOTS** 10418 Whyte Ave • Open Wed-Sat 12-4pm or Fri 780.438.7978 • **PETITE NUDES—A DUALITY OF FORM:** Sculptures by Ritchie Velthuis and Beata Kurpinski • Until Aug 15

**VAAA GALLERY** 3rd Fl, 10215-112 St, 780.421.1717 • **THE GOLDEN RULE:** Watercolours by Michelle Leavitt-Djonic • **IN THE BALANCE:** Artworks by VAAA board members and staff • Until Aug 20

**VELVET OLIVE LOUNGE—Red Deer** 49-34 St, Street in the alley • **THE SECRET LANGUAGE OF ROADS:** Altered photographs by Glynis Wil Boulton • Through August

## LITERARY

**AUDREYS BOOKS** 10702 Jasper Ave, 780.423.3487 • Poetry Nights and Fri each month

**BLUE CHAIR CAFÉ** 9624-76 Ave, 780.469.8717 • Story Slam: every 3rd Wed of the month

**CARROT CAFÉ** 9351-118 Ave, 780.752.4867 • Carrot Writing Circle • Every Tue, 7-9pm; A critique circle the 4th Tue every month

**HAPPY HARBOR COMICS VOL 1** 10112-124 St, 780.452.8211 • Launch of Archie Marries Veronica the wedding of Riverdale's Archie Andrews and Veronica Lodge • Wed, Aug 19, 11am

**INDIGO BOOKSTORE** South Edmonton Common • kathyjessup.com • Storytelling concert *Listen Up! Tellable Tales for Hungry Ears*; CD release for children with Kathy Jessup • Sat, Aug 22, 1:30pm • Free

**LEVA CAPPUCCINO BAR** 11053-86 Ave, 780.479.5382, www.levabar.com • Standing room only, poetry every 3rd Sun evening

**ROSIE'S** 10475-80 Ave, 780.439.7211 • **TALES** Edmonton Storytelling Café: T.A.L.E.S. Alberta League Encouraging Storytelling open mic • 1st Thu each month, 7-9pm • Pay-What-You-Will (min \$6); info at 780.932.4409

**ROUGE LOUNGE** 10111-117 St, 780.902.5900 • Poetry Tuesday: Every Tue with Edmonton's local poets • 8pm • No cover

**UPPER CRUST CAFÉ** 10909-86 Ave, 780.422.8114 • **The Poets' Haven:** Monday Night reading series presented by Stroll of Poets • Every Mon, 7pm • \$5 door

## THEATRE

**FRINGE THEATRE FESTIVAL** • Various venue in Old Strathcona area • fringe-theatre-adventures.ca • Stage a Revolution • Aug 13-23 • Tickets or sale online; program guides available at various locations including Greenwood's Bookshoppe, Wee Book Inn (Whyte), Audreys Books, TIX on the Square, Fringe Theatre Adventures box office

**THE OCCULTIST'S HOLIDAY** Varsoona Theatre, 19329-83 Ave, 780.433.3399 • **Teatro la Quindicina** • Set in an alpine setting, a diverse group of travellers are linked by a shared experience which will haunt them forever after. Starring Barbara Gates Wilson, Leona Brausen, Mal Busby, Jeff Haslam, and Davina Stewart • Aug 14-25 • Fringe performances: \$14; Hold over week performances available at TIX on the Square: \$20 (adult)/\$18 (student/senior)

**SIX DANCE LESSONS IN SIX WEEKS** Mayfield Dinner Theatre, 16615-109 Ave, 780.483.4051 • By Richard Alfieri, the story of the acquaintance between a sprightly retiree and her young dancer teacher • Until Aug 23 • Tickets at Mayfield box office, toll-free: 1.877.529.7829

**THANK YOU MR. PRESLEY** Jubilations Dinner Theatre, #2690, 8882-170 St, WEM, 780.484.2424 • By Joseph Davies • June 12-Aug 16

# Megatunes

Your Music Destination

## TOP 30 FOR THE WEEK OF AUGUST 13, 2009

1. Sam Baker - Cotton (music road)
2. Slaid Cleaves - Everything You Love Will Be Taken Away... (music road)
3. Steve Earle - Townes (new west)
4. Watermelon Slim - Escape From The Chicken Coop (northern blues)
5. The Dead Weather - Horehound (warner)
6. Modest Mouse - No One's First, And You're Next (epic)
7. The Low Anthem - Oh My God, Charlie Darwin (nonesuch)
8. Wilco - The Album (nonesuch)
9. Raul Malo - Lucky One (concord)
10. Tommy Castro - Hard Believer (alligator)
11. Reverie Sound Review - S/T (boompa)
12. Neko Case - Middle Cyclone (anti)
13. Gurf Morlix - Last Exit To Happyland (gurf morlix)
14. Lee Harvey Osmond - A Quiet Evil (latent)
15. Magnolia Electric Co. - Josephine (secretly canadian)
16. Various - Ribbon Of Highway, Endless Skyway: The Woody Guthrie Tribute (music road)
17. The Wallin' Jennys - Live At The Mauch Chunk Opera House (outside)
18. Dinosaur Jr. - Farm (jagjaguwar)
19. Behemoth - Evangelion (metal blade)
20. Jim Byrnes - My Walking Stick (black hen)
21. Neil Young - Fork In The Road (reprise)
22. Dirty Projectors - Britte Orca (domino)
23. David Gogo - Different Views (cordova bay)
24. Eddi Reader - Love Is The Way (rough trade)
25. Grizzly Bear - Veckatimest (warp)
26. Sonic Youth - The Eternal (matador)
27. Dan Mangan - Nice, Nice, Very Nice (furm)
28. Joel Plaskett - Three (maplemusic)
29. Bob Dylan - Together Through Life (columbia)
30. Dave Alvin - And The Guilty Women (yep roc)

## BEHEMOTH EVANGELION

After the Behemoth was done pulling my legs out of their sockets it began chewing at them ferociously, no doubt catching a whiff of my unattended cuticles, and the toes they rotted from. This big bad Behemoth had been after me since I suggested that its spine had become curved as a result of the balls hanging heavy and low between the warts of its thighs. It was meant as a joke. He scowled down at the paper as he added me to "the list". Robin Williams should have known he was hallucinating in the from my back pocket and shrugged it off. I should have known better I guess. Behemoth has a new record and it's on sale now. Na-nu Na-Nu

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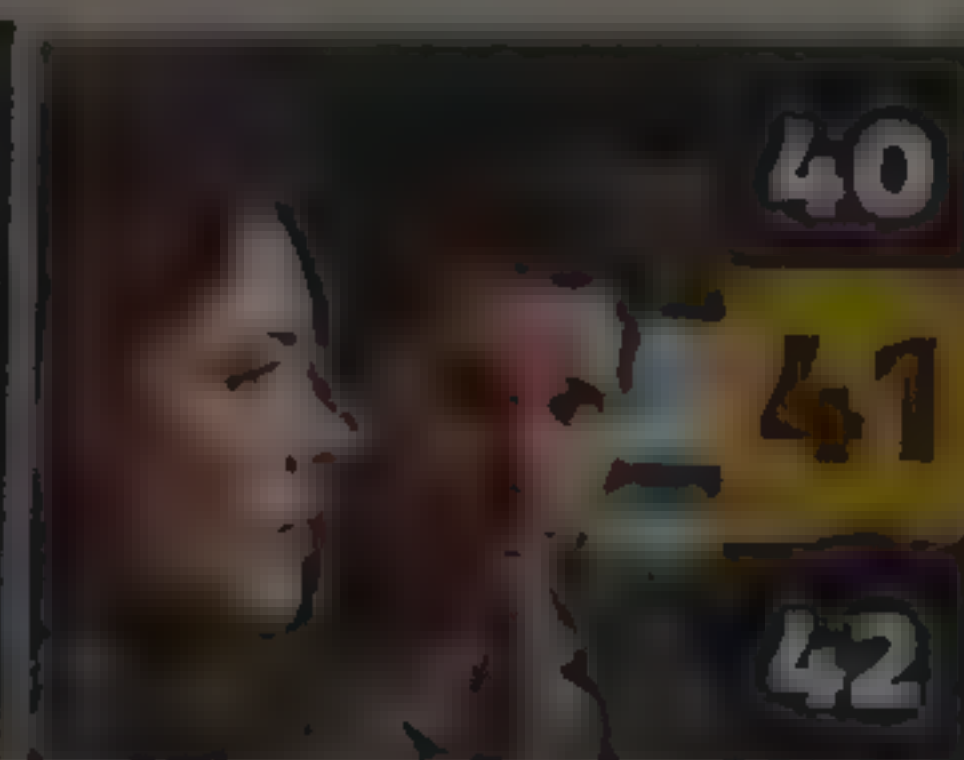
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The smoke from a cigarette is not just inhaled by the smoker. It becomes second-hand smoke, which contains more than 50 cancer-causing agents.

Health Canada





40

Bandslam

41

The Time Traveler's Wife

42

G.I. Joe



Online at [vueweekly.com](http://vueweekly.com)

The Rise of the '80s  
by Brian Gibson

Brian Gibson examines the wave of '80s nostalgia in SideVue

FILM // DISTRICT 9

## Castaways from outer space

Despite its distracting adherence to faux-doc style, Blomkamp's *District 9* is a visionary take on first contact



WELCOME TO EARTH >> *District 9* proves as metaphorically rich as it is thrilling // Supplied

JOSEF BAUER

JOSEF@VUEWEEKLY.COM

Not invaders so much as castaways, the aliens wash up over Johannesburg, their great ship looming, suspended and ominously silent for a long while until we humans finally break in and discover the lot of them ailing and with no place to go. More than two decades later the aliens have become the new gypsies, a nationless people unwanted, feared, segregated, blamed for all sorts of things. They're already loosely confined to a zone, but our story begins proper when a private multinational is hired to round them all up and send them to a more remote colony, out of sight, out of mind, herded into the ghetto.

*District 9* takes a rather visionary approach to our anxious dreams of extraterrestrial first contact, picking up cues from a lot of great science fiction prose, the sort that rarely gets made into movies. (It's also entirely possible that parts of its story were inspired by Stanley Kramer's 1958 film *The Defiant Ones*.) By rendering the aliens as ostracized refugees in South Africa the film opens the doors wide to invite all manner of metaphorical interpretation, grounding its narrative in the landscape of apart-

heid and having human characters of all racial backgrounds disparage their visitors with reactionary, colonialist rhetoric, their intolerance made ostensibly acceptable by the humanoid yet crustacean-like aliens' all-too-evident Otherness. But this remarkable feature debut from South African-Canadian filmmaker Neill Blomkamp, made under the auspices of producer Peter Jackson, also functions quite nicely as engrossing comic book stuff. In fact, the deeper it ventures into pulp territory, the better it gets.

Wikus Van De Merwe (Sharlto Copley) is our unlikely protagonist, a naïve, clownish, moustached bureaucrat who earns his high-profile position of supervising the relocation project through pure nepotism. He's a Kafkaesque tragic character in more ways than one, having first been ill-prepared for a mission fraught with issues of miscommunication and conflicting agendas, and then coming into contact with an alien fluid that infects him with some mysterious gene-altering virus. Wikus could never be mistaken for a hero—it's only his process of transfiguration, and his sudden value to military strategists, that forces him to become heroic. He gets lucky, and his sheer will to survive is strong.

He becomes an unwitting symbol for the possibility of racial conciliation, and embarks on a bloody adventure that slowly turns desperate self-interest into something far grander.

**District 9 is wildly ambitious.** By its brilliantly realized finale these ambitions are surprisingly fulfilled. Its difficulties arise mostly through a sense of uncertainty with form. Of the more mature filmmakers one might imagine

generic—opportunity to get a lot of exposition out of the way. But they continue to try and convince us that we're watching a kind of documentary long afterwards, and it's only when the form's limitations become too constraining—we eventually need to see characters in situations that no diegetically placed camera could possibly capture—that the film starts breaking its own rules and things get confused. With its handheld, vérité aesthetic, the faux-doc for-

tracting start, but rest assured it will more than make up for it, partially just because the story is so well-structured and the political—at times outright satirical—undercurrents so rich. Copley compliments this by hurling himself into the squirm-inducing physicality of the role and surrendering completely to the risky notion of the totally bumbling protagonist. Wikus is definitely not cut from the Cronenbergian model of the reflective hero fascinated by his own terrifying metamorphosis. The guy is really an idiot, and through it serves the drama effectively: the meager redemption he finds is hard-won. This is what makes this sort of story work, the understanding that heroism is always a balance of character and circumstance, and once in while the latter grossly outweighs the former. In any case, it's a must-see for anyone with even the slightest appetite for smart spectacle. It sure beats the hell out of the rest of the current summer stock. **V**

**District 9 takes a rather visionary approach to our anxious dreams of extraterrestrial first contact, picking up cues from a lot of great science fiction prose, the sort that rarely gets made into movies.**

taking on such a project—Paul Verhoeven or David Cronenberg spring to mind—I can't think of any who would have stuck with the limiting faux-documentary approach developed by Blomkamp and his co-scenarist Terri Tatchell, which simply causes a lot of unnecessary problems. Opening with the news show-style commentaries and character introductions offers the filmmakers a perfectly legitimate—if rather

mat allows filmmakers to cheat certain things that a more classical approach is less forgiving of, but Blomkamp hardly seems like he's trying to make *The Blair Witch Project*; on the contrary, he seems a skilled craftsman, so I can't help but wonder why he didn't go all the way and embrace the aesthetic demands of an unmistakably fictional film when his story started begging for it.

So *District 9* gets off to a wobbly, dis-

OPENS FRI AUG 14

DISTRICT 9

DIRECTED BY NEILL BLOMKAMP

WRITTEN BY BLOMKAMP, TERRI TACHELL

STARRING SHARLTO COPLEY

★★★★☆



# Got to keep on moving

Assayas crafts a moving, honest take on life's inevitability

JOSEF BRAUN

VUEWEEKLY.COM

In part a story about things of weight, property, a house, the objects amassed in it, some of which are cultural artifacts of immense value, some purely functional yet shot through with significance for those who've handled them, enjoyed them, disliked them, known them in some way. It's about, to paraphrase one of the characters, the residue of a life with its memories and its secrets. It's about the burden of inheritance. An elderly woman leaves her three adult children with items to put in order—that's pretty much the gist of the story here. But it's also a lot about *Summer Hours* (*L'été d'été*) that it both opens and closes with children scampering through the woods, whether in the midst of a treasure hunt or traipsing along the bridge to adulthood, on the cusp of some tender new sensual awakening. The presence of youth along its perimeter imbues this fundamentally adult tale with unmistakable lightness, as does the gliding camerawork and the naturalness of the marvelous cast's collective presence. Such lightness is finally the only method of approaching material so brimming with emotional complexity.

Olivier Assayas is a filmmaker of special dexterity. He makes films that are boldly audacious and films that are quietly arresting, films that are international and cool and films that are local and intimate. *Irma Vep* and *demonlover* roughly fall into the former category, *Summer Hours* very much into the latter. Prompted in part by a commission from the Musée d'Orsay—who previ-



HERE WE GO >> A trio of siblings deals with their past in Oliver Assayas' moving *Summer Hours* (R, E! films)

ously produced Hou Hsiao-hsien's *Flight of the Red Balloon*—the siblings at its centre are diasporic enough to reflect Assayas' global sensibility, but the setting and the themes are thoroughly invested in home and heritage.

Frédéric (Charles Berling) is an economist living in Paris with his family. He's just published an iconoclastic book, yet his instincts are firmly rooted in tradition, in what can be passed from one generation to another. Adrienne

(Juliette Binoche), by contrast, is a designer who favours bright colours and crisp modern simplicity. She lives in New York (and is so entrenched in Americaness she's actually marrying Clint Eastwood's son). Jérémie (Jérémie Renier) has roamed the farthest of the three, working as a supervisor for Puma in China and is now in the costly process of moving his wife and three kids there to start a new life. When the film opens, the siblings share a rare reunion

with their mother Hélène (Edith Scob) to celebrate her 75th birthday. In the midst of the gathering Hélène will take Frédéric aside to go over some of her house's inventory for the umpteenth time, the Corot paintings and Louis Majorelle desk, and the notebooks and sketches of great uncle Paul Berthier, whose work is still sought after and who may or may not have had an affair with Hélène decades ago. Soon enough Hélène will be gone and all this "bric-a-

brac from another era" (her much to Frédéric's chagrin, sold off. Life goes on.

The eloquence of *Summer Hours* from the way Assayas, alone cast and crew—including cinematographer Eric Gauthier—captures this sense of life's hopelessness of movement without a trace, yet flowing with overwhelming grace. Even if your family bears not a resemblance to this one, the emotions and disappointments and recoveries will resonate, in any awkward straining toward things "universal" but rather in their very particularity. Each character is fully drawn as to feel warm and able before they even say a word. In the first scene, a treasure hunt for a piece of paper is found. One correctly guesses that the paper is the clue but that the clue's written in ink. Watching *Summer Hours* time I had to smile at this little prelude of what's to come: a cycle of managing the residue of a life where the secret message carries waits invisibly for the viewer to decipher and digest. It's a deep breath, and let go.

OPENS FRI, AUG 14

SUMMER HOURS

WRITTEN &amp; DIRECTED BY OLIVIER ASSAYAS

STARRING CHARLES BERLING, JULIETTE BINOCHÉ, JÉRÉMIE RENIER

★★★★★

## DVD > DARKON / THE UNION

# L'esprit souterrain

Pair of docs turn their gaze towards places we don't normally look

It opens with a screed that could come straight out of a second-rate fantasy paperback, warning of trouble in the realm and the gathering forces of night elves. But if this is a fantasy epic, it looks pathetically under budget: black paint and bad dye jobs are all the costumes these night elves have, not that we can see much of them in the flickering firelight.

*Darkon*, out on a pretty bare-bones release, is, of course, not actually a fantasy epic, although it will examine some arcane, vaguely medieval political dealings and climax with a grandiose battle. Exploring the lives of a group of live-action fantasy role-players—basically *Dungeons & Dragons* dragged out from behind the table and into the woods—it takes us as deep into its eponymous, surprisingly detailed realm as it does into the psyche of the type of person who would decide to spend two weekends a month carrying PVC weapons and chain mail, defending the honour of a fictitious country.

I don't mean that description to sound derisive: unquestionably *Darkon's* biggest strength is its largely unjudgement-

al delivery—there are a few winks, such as a scene where a group of role-players lug gear through a public park while a middle-aged jogger trundles through the background while another player explains where they find their terrain—both towards the players in general and to the two egoists who make up its centre. Skip Lipman, who plays Bannor, leader of Laconia, has grown up role-playing, his dad running a successful war-gaming company that eventually went sour at the hands of his brother, an event that Skip is just a little bitter about (and it's more than implied that his devotion to *Darkon* is in no small way some attempt to right the situation in his eyes). His sort-of adversary is Kenyon Wells—a.k.a. Keldar, leader of Mordom—an arrogant business-type who's only propped up by the fact his nation is far and away the strongest in the realm.

Their struggle for power is the closest thing the film has to a narrative arc, and though the parallels to *King of Kong* are obvious, *Darkon's* more similar in spirit, and is generally more fascinating when it tries to emulate, something like *Word-*

play, taking us into a unique and decidedly outré subculture. It probably isn't all that surprising to point out that the common thread amongst the players is that they're all social outcasts—or at least were in their formative years—and the sundry reasons they have for escaping into what's actually a pretty invasive hobby make for compelling stories. There's the 28-year-old former stripper/single mother who still lives with her parents, who finds in *Darkon* a rare opportunity to control her life. Particularly compelling is an overweight barista who sees *Darkon* as a chance for him to gain some social skills—it certainly helped Wells, which he reminds us of several times—but who also has a kind of boiling undercurrent of rage at the world that's obviously quelled by wailing on people with fake swords.

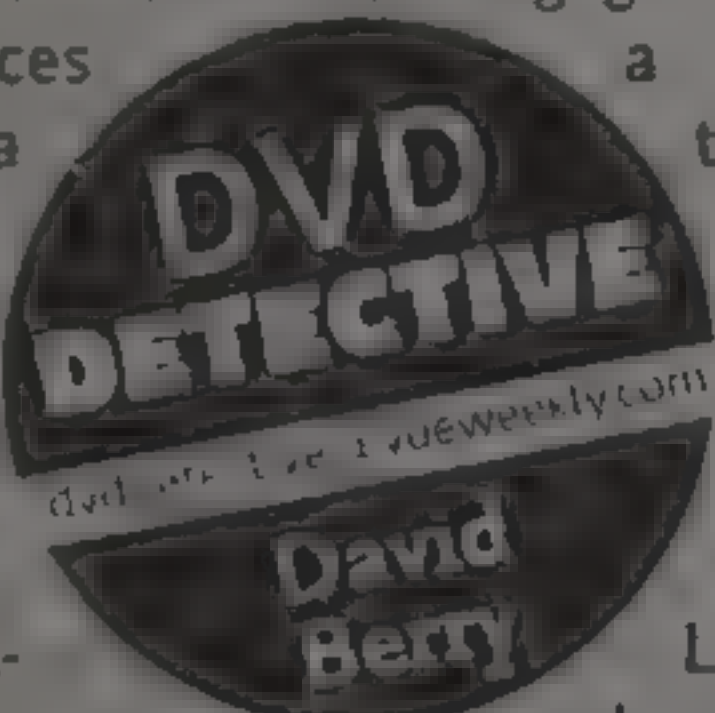
*Darkon* certainly could have benefitted from focusing less of the tension between Lipman and Wells, which doesn't seem to spill over as much as it should for true drama, and adding a bit more context: some kind of comparison between this particular escape and others would have been a nice way of further undercutting the inevitable cries of "nerd" from less

open-minded people, and the question of why so many outcasts gravitate towards this specific kind of fantasy/role-playing expression—seriously, what is it about swords and sorcery?—goes curiously unaddressed. But those are minor quibbles about a documentary that engrosses you in its fictional world almost as thoroughly as its characters.

In its own way, *The Union: The Business Behind Getting High* is also examining a subculture of escape, though this one has some very real-world consequences. As its name would imply, *The Union* is a fairly in-depth look at the economics of BC Bud—a \$7-billion-a-year industry that, were it legal, would qualify as our western neighbour's largest—although at its heart it really isn't much more than a bit of pro-pot propaganda that extends its argument beyond the usual medical/libertarian reasons to include some economics.

Not that there's necessarily any problem with that argument as such: trotting out the usual specters of the suspect past of marijuana prohibition and its potential as a relatively natural medicine with a healthy exploration of what it would mean both for tax coffers and organized crime makes for an effective argument, and *The Union* is as apt as any other mouthpiece at pointing out the hypocrisy and shortsightedness of our drug laws (notwithstanding

its bizarre tendency to reargue about as often as Harry Potter). It's just that it feels like Brett Harvey has left a real movie on the table here. The actual structure of the industry is fairly fascinating, a web that stretches across one out of every 100 doors, has a grow-op, and the marijuana encompasses everyone's dealers looking for easy money by-the-hour clippers to offer to homeowners who don't want getting a little more above the law, say nothing of what the industry means for everything from shipping to Home Depots. Harvey has the least amount of time, though, preferring to focus on his legalization argument, a borderline-exploitative interview with an MS sufferer who's helped by cal marijuana, as well as the table political pot figures and David Malmo-Levin, a more nuanced look behind the scenes. I know everything is political, worthwhile debate and all that stuff, but really, would it be anything in the world to just go and style look into a culture that's on our fringes? *The Union* is fine to start a debate, but there are more interesting topics to be discussed.






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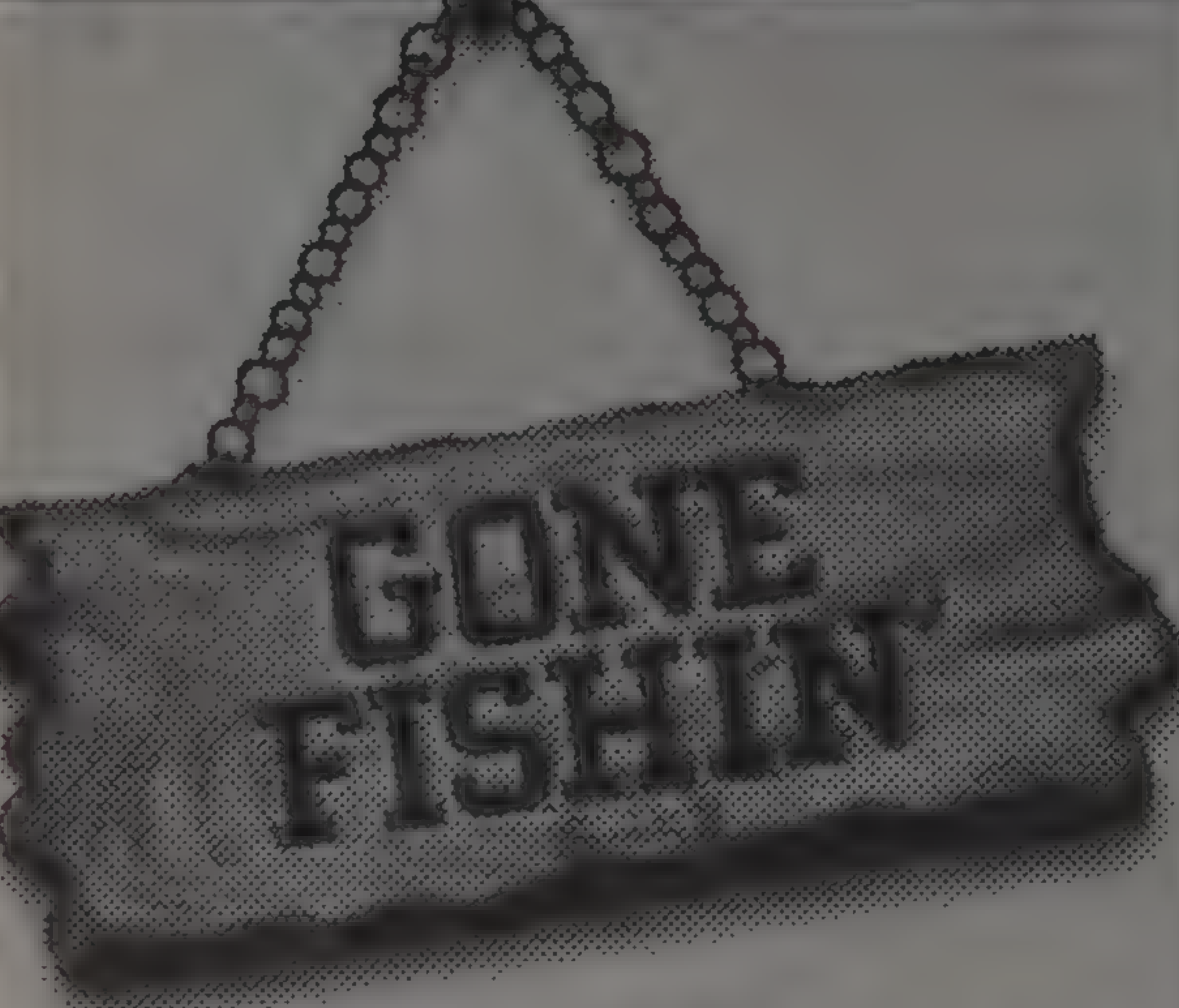
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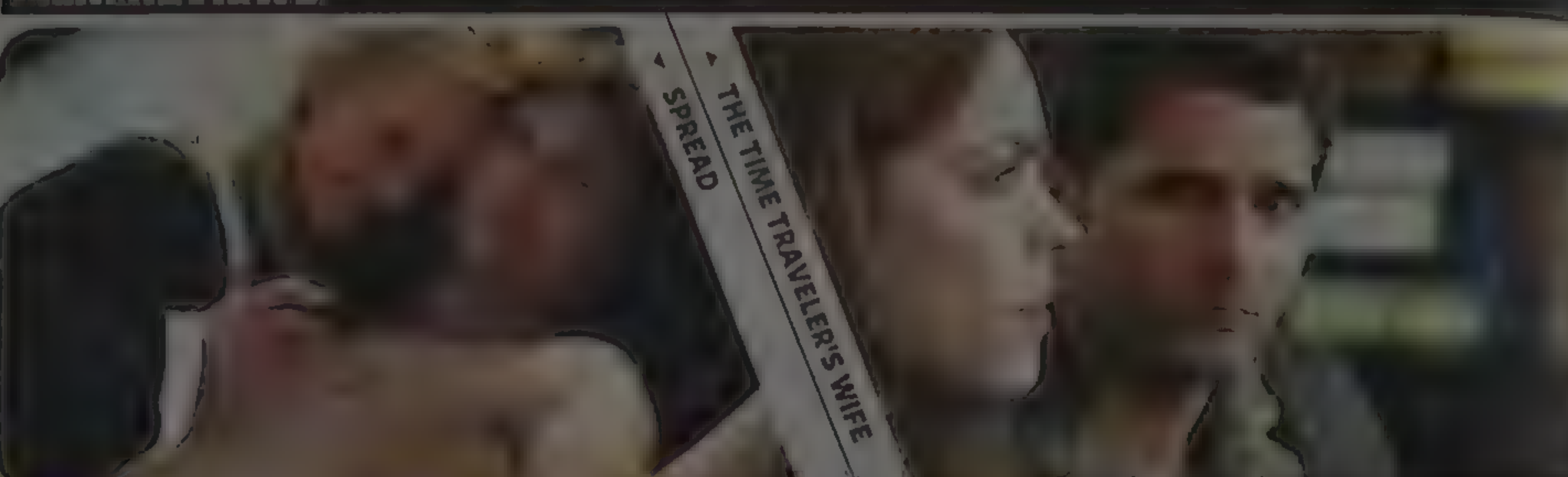
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**FILM REVIEWS**



**Film Capsules**

### Opening this week

#### **Bandslam**

Directed by Todd Graff  
Written by Graff, Josh Cagan  
Starring Gaelan Connell, Lisa Kudrow, Vanessa Hudgens

Part of **Bandslam**—an unbelievably horrible film aimed at pre-teens that should know better—begs to be taken seriously, as though it offers to young people a historical perspective into pop music culture that the candyland of Nickelodeon and Hannah Montana intentionally shields. Instead, it repeatedly shits all over itself in every attempt to educate the young folks about David Bowie and the Velvet Underground, and then swims in the watery, poo-ridden mess, grinning at us like we've been rock and rolled right out of our seats. Truth be told, our beloved Mi-

ley, the Jo Bros or even a dirty old Bratz doll in the Value Village toy department propose a greater cultural subjectivity inspired by the past of rock 'n' roll than this. Parents, keep your kids away.

The title speaks of a West Coast battle of high school bands, where the states neighbouring NY compete for an honest-to-Christ record deal. New kid Will Burton (Gaelan Connell) is baffled by the excitement that the school throws for its token dopey jockboy guitar gaggle, The Glory Dogs, but it puts him in touch with funky brunette Sa5m (Vanessa Hudgens), who shows equal disdain. Will, turned on by her charms and clever name ("the 5 is silent" she proclaims), is also distracted by the sudden interest taken in him by former Glory Dogs member and popular girl Charlotte (Aly Michalka), who lands him as the manager of her new band.

Will first notices that their band sucks, and reshapes them by including an Asian girl on the piano and a Camera Obscura-lookalike cello player. Eventually, his success in teaching the band the rules of the game reveals that he is only turning his back on his past, where he and his cougarish mother (Lisa Kudrow) ran from familial troubles that cease to torment them.

Every inch **Bandslam** moves forward, the Lord hath taken away in minutes. For example, Will builds up the band's typical garage sound to eventually mimic a solid Fisher Price version of Arcade Fire, then decides that the ultimate song for the competition is Charlotte's penned ballad straight out of a spoiled blonde cheerleader's diary. Meanwhile, Will narrates a string of heartfelt fantasy letters to David Bowie, to whom he confesses his anxieties as the film putts along; near the end, we witness one of the most horrifying cameos in film history, running into the ground both the endearing humbleness of Will's character and the career of the most significant male artist of the 1970s.

After the film ended, I felt like Claude in the last season of Degrassi High, in that I wanted to hide in a bathroom stall and shoot myself in the face, purely to make a grander statement.

**JONATHAN BUECH**

// [jonathan@vuwweekly.com](mailto:jonathan@vuwweekly.com)

#### **Spread**

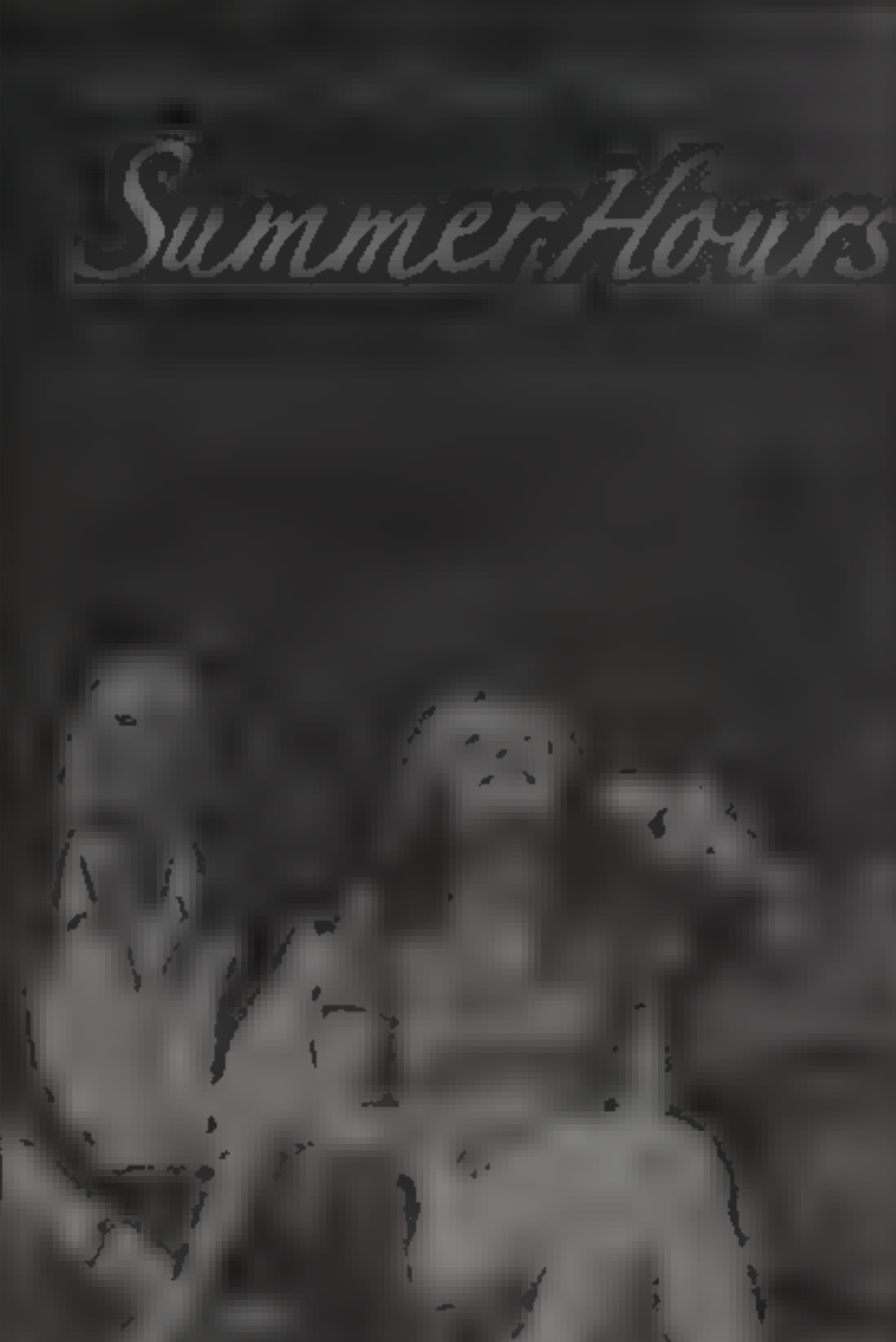
Directed by David Mackenzie  
Written by Jason Hall, Paul Kolsby  
Starring Ashton Kutcher, Anne Heche, Margarita Levieva  
☆☆☆☆

If it weren't for David Mackenzie's occasional directorial flourishes—particularly a couple impressive tracking shots—and the fact that Ashton Kutcher probably isn't that desperate for work yet, the first half of **Spread** would basically be indistinguishable from softcore porn. The film lingers and leers over largely unnecessary sex scenes and the palatial LA home of attorney Samantha (Anne Heche) while Kutcher's pouting heartbreaker, Nikki, waxes philosophic on the finer points of living a life of leisure via bedding older, unattached women.

That said, at least the first half of the film has some cheap titillation going for it. By the time Nikki has supposedly started seeing how empty his life is—just so we're clear, here, yes, we are expected to identify with the existential crisis of a man who literally spends his days fucking a wide demographic of Californian babes and relaxing beside the panoramic-view pools he's sponging off them, and no, this isn't a satire—the film is bogged down in a character study of a character it never bothered to make you care about. The catalyst for all of this is a run-in with a waitress (Margarita Levieva) who's pulling the same tricks as him: based on his reaction, she's evidently the first woman who's ever turned him down—and the way the film sets Nikki up, that could be true—and yet also so irresistible that a man who has spent the entirety of our time with him carefully breaking down his toxic cadishness falls head-over-heels in love after about 10 minutes of actual conversation.

Let's not limit the film's problem to just its plot and main character, though. There's also a healthy streak of LA blind arrogance that sleazy smarminess that people really proud of the fact they moved to Los Angeles can't help but ooze, all but sneering at us poor, pale, chubby slob who have the gall not to move to a place they'll freely admit is vacuous and fake. And of course there's the understated but palpable misogyny—every woman is helpless, untrustworthy or a slut, occasionally some combination—which would be detestable

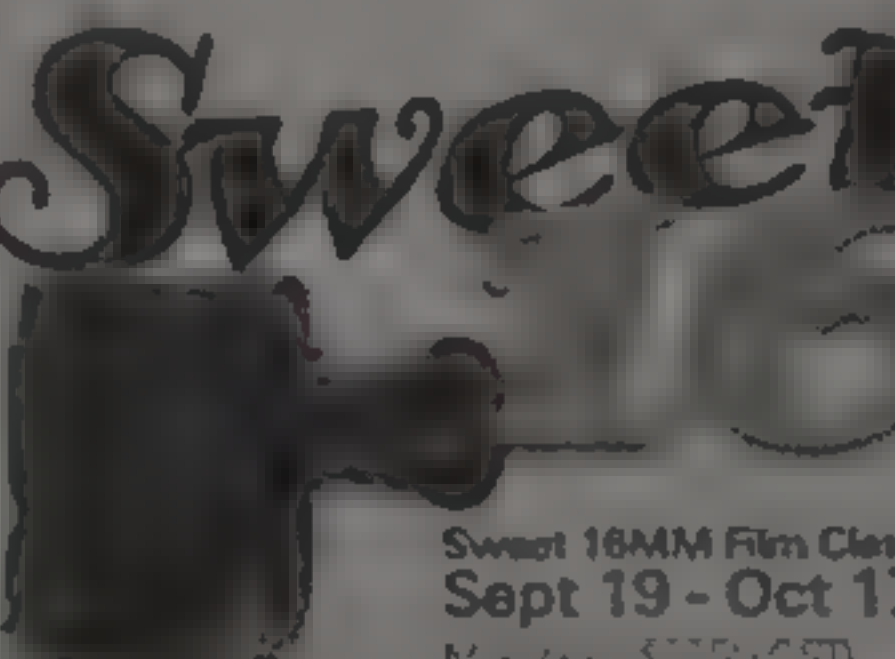
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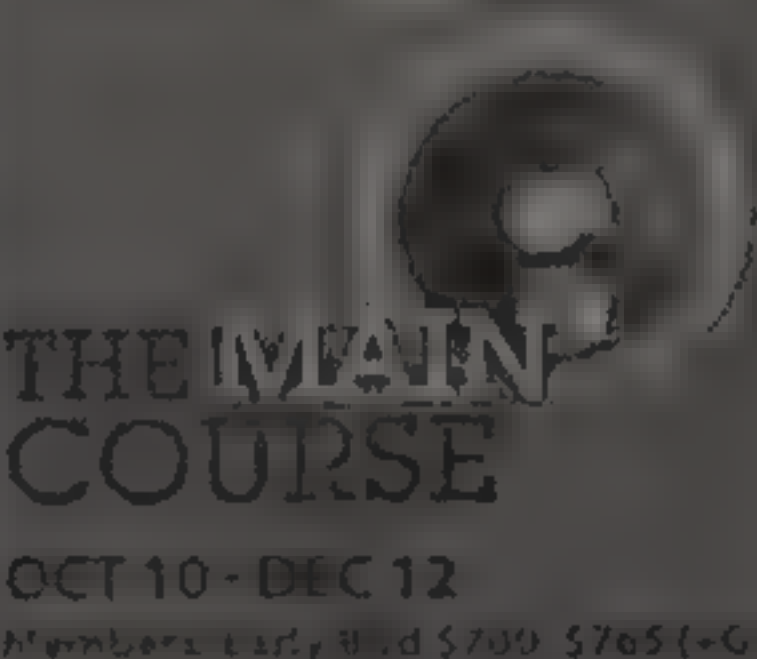
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# FILM REVIEWS

## Film Capsules

even if it didn't also serve to mute any actual critique of Nikki, only further flattening and already dull, lifeless character.

DAVID BERRY

DAVID.BERRY@CTV.COM

### The Time Traveler's Wife

Directed by Robert Schwentke  
Starring: Bruce Joel Rubin,  
Eric Bana, Rachel McAdams  
★★★☆☆

Putting proper time into a relationship is a luxury for the best of us when consumed by the daily grind. But imagine doing so while suffering from a genetic disorder that causes one to randomly transport, naked, to other times and locations. That's the premise of the raucous scenario put forward by *The Time Traveler's Wife*, which features the hapless genes of Henry DeTamble (Eric Bana) and Clare Alshire (Rachel McAdams) as they grapple with his condition. It may be a little off its premise in conception, but as *Time Traveler's Wife* once said, "time travel stories are so much fun to be eliminated merely by the mundane considerations of impracticality, or even impossibility." Fully embracing that credo, the story mostly works, even if it's a little off.

It helps that the often ineptly executed and frequently abused plot device is being employed for a noble purpose: to explore legitimate emotional and philosophical issues. In addition to creating romantic tension, the film touches upon questions pertaining to the concept of linear time, free will versus determinism, and the changing nature of self-identity over the course of a lifetime. Its degree of artistic ambition for a chick flick is admirable, even where it fails.

And there are plenty of deficiencies, often stemming from the disconnect between the book and film mediums. It feels noticeably condensed and, at times, underdeveloped. The presentation is problematic and difficult because it shifts between Henry's perspective and the rest of the world's. And the speed at which the plot jumps along makes it difficult to ruminate too extensively upon any of the issues that are raised.

Owing to the irregular structure, it's unclear exactly how the two initially met and whether he is exploiting her, but the (perhaps unintentional) moral ambiguity stemming from Henry's manipulations actually make their relationship a lot more interesting. Most notably, scenes featuring the adult Henry and child Clare have disconcerting pedophilic overtones, but strong performances by all parties help make this much less creepy than it really ought to be as the film goes on. Is their love blind to circumstance, or entirely beholden to it? It's smarter and less straightforward than most love stories, and made believable through the chemistry between Bana and McAdams.

It was a good creative decision for the nature of Henry's condition to be underwritten, because attempting to make sense of it would be a waste of time and undermine the real focus, which is on the consequences. And it's a pretty damn clever way of touching upon dysfunctional relationships without introducing the taboos of the physical and mental disorders, substance abuse, egoism and absenteeism that would disrupt the real relationship. Ironically, it's a condition that a general audience can widely sympathize with precisely because it's emotional and outlandish. It's universal

CONTINUED ON PAGE 41 >>

# FILM WEEKLY

FRI, AUGUST 14, 2009 - THU, AUGUST 20, 2009

## CHABA THEATRE-JASPER

6094 Cornsight Dr, Jasper, 780.853.4749

### G.I. JOE: THE RISE OF COBRA (14A)

Daily 1:30, 6:50, 9:05

### MY SISTER'S KEEPER (14A)

Daily 1:30, 6:50, 9:05

## CINEMA IN THE SUBURBS

Whitford Crossing, 4271-106 St, 780.494.1822

**THE ROAD WARRIOR** (18A, brutal violence, nudity)  
Wed, Aug 19, 6:30pm; Part of the Alternative Action Series

## EDMONTON FILM SOCIETY

Royal Alberta Museum, 102 Ave, 128 St, 780.439.5184

### TEA FOR TWO (PG)

Mon, Aug 17, 8:00

## CINEMA CITY MOVIES 12

5074-130 Ave, 780.472.9779

### KAMINEY (HINDI W/E.S.T.) (STC)

Daily 1:05, 4:00, 6:55, 9:55

### LOVE AAI KAL (HINDI W/E.S.T.) (PG)

Daily 1:10, 4:05, 6:50, 9:40

### ORPHAN (18A)

Fri-Sat 1:30, 4:30, 7:10, 9:55, 12:35; Sun-Thu 1:50, 4:30, 7:10, 9:55

### MOON (14A)

Fri-Sat 9:25, 11:40; Sun-Thu 9:25

**WHATEVER WORKS** (PG, not recommended for children, sexual content)  
Fri-Sat 10:05, 12:10; Sun-Thu 10:05

### YEAR ONE (14A, crude content)

Fri-Sat 1:40, 4:35, 7:30, 9:30, 11:45; Sun-Thu 1:40, 4:35, 7:30, 9:30

### IMAGINE THAT (G)

Daily 2:00, 4:50, 7:35

**THE TAKING OF PELHAM 123** (14A, violence, coarse language)  
Fri-Sat 1:35, 4:10, 7:25, 9:45, 12:00; Sun-Thu 1:35, 4:10, 7:25, 9:45

### THE

**LAND OF THE LOST** (PG, crude content, coarse language)  
Daily 1:45, 4:40, 7:20

**NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM: BATTLE OF THE SMITHSONIAN** (PG)  
Fri-Sat 1:30, 4:20, 7:15, 9:35, 11:55; Sun-Thu 1:30, 4:20, 7:15, 9:35

Fri-Sat 1:35, 4:25, 6:45, 9:20, 11:50; Sun-Thu 1:35, 4:25, 6:45, 9:20

### ANGELS AND DEMONS (14A, violence)

Daily 1:15, 4:00, 6:50, 9:50

### STAR TREK (PG, violence)

Fri-Sat 1:20, 4:05, 7:00, 9:50, 12:20; Sun-Thu 1:20, 4:05, 7:00, 9:50

### X-MEN ORIGINS: WOLVERINE (14A)

Fri-Sat 10:00, 12:15; Sun-Thu 10:00

### MONSTERS VS. ALIENS (G)

Daily 1:55, 4:45, 7:05

## CINENPLEX ODEON NORTH

16231-137th Avenue, 780.732.2236

**THE GOODS: LIVE HARD, SELL HARD** (18A)  
No passes Daily 1:00, 3:10, 5:30, 8:00, 10:35

**DISTRICT 9** (14A, brutal violence, gory scenes, coarse language)  
Digital, Cinema, No passes Daily 1:50, 2:20, 5:00, 7:50, 10:40

### BANDSLAM (PG)

Daily 1:50, 4:30, 7:20, 10:00

**TIME TRAVELLER'S WIFE** (PG, nudity, mature subject matter)  
Daily 1:20, 4:10, 6:50, 9:40

### PONYO (G)

No passes Daily 1:40, 4:20, 6:45, 9:10

### A PERFECT GETAWAY (18A, gory violence)

Daily 12:45, 3:00, 5:20, 7:45, 10:35

### G.I. JOE: THE RISE OF COBRA (14A)

Daily 1:30, 4:40, 6:40, 7:30, 9:30, 10:30

### JULIE AND JULIA (PG, coarse language)

No passes Fri-Tue, Thu 1:10, 3:50, 7:00, 9:50, Wed 3:50, 7:00, 9:50; Star and Strollers Screening: Wed 1:00

### FUNNY PEOPLE (14A, crude coarse language, sexual content, not recommended for children)

Daily 12:50, 4:00, 7:10, 10:20

**THE UGLY TRUTH** (14A, sexual content, language may offend)  
Daily 12:40, 2:50, 5:10, 7:40, 10:10

### G-FORCE IN DISNEY DIGITAL 3D (G)

Digital, 3d Daily 12:30, 2:40, 4:50, 7:15, 9:20

### HARRY POTTER AND THE HALF BLOOD PRINCE (PG, violence, frightening scenes)

Daily 2:15, 6:30, 9:45

### ICE AGE: DAWN OF THE DINOSAURS (G)

Daily 12:10, 2:30, 4:45, 7:05

### TRANSFORMERS: REVENGE OF THE FALLEN (PG, violence, crude content, not recommended for young children)

Daily 12:10, 3:30, 5:50, 8:10, 10:30

### THE PROPOSAL (PG, coarse language)

Daily 9:15

### THE HANGOVER (18A, language may offend, nudity, crude content)

Daily 12:10, 2:30, 4:45, 7:05

crude content)

Daily 12:00

## CINENPLEX ODEON SOUTH

1623-99 St, 780.436.8585

### THE GOODS: LIVE HARD, SELL HARD (18A)

No passes Daily 12:45, 3:00, 5:20, 7:55, 10:30

### DISTRICT 9 (14A, brutal violence, gory scenes, coarse language)

No passes Daily 1:40, 4:35, 7:30, 10:20

### BANDSLAM (PG)

Daily 1:15, 4:15, 7:05, 9:45

### TIME TRAVELLER'S WIFE (PG, nudity, mature subject matter)

Daily 1:00, 4:10, 7:00, 9:50

### PONYO (G)

No passes Daily 12:50, 4:00, 6:50, 9:20

### A PERFECT GETAWAY (18A, gory violence)

Daily 12:05, 2:30, 4:50, 7:40, 10:35

### G.I. JOE: THE RISE OF COBRA (14A)

Daily 1:25, 4:20, 7:05, 7:45, 9:50, 10:35

### JULIE AND JULIA (PG, coarse language)

Digital, Cinema, No passes Daily 1:30, 4:30, 7:20, 10:10

### FUNNY PEOPLE (14A, crude coarse language, sexual content, not recommended for children)

Daily 12:35, 3:40, 6:45, 10:15

### THE UGLY TRUTH (14A, sexual content, language may offend)

Fri-Wed 12:30, 3:05, 5:25, 7:50, 10:25; Thu 3:10, 5:25, 7:50, 10:25; Star and Strollers Screening: Thu 1:00

### G-FORCE IN DISNEY DIGITAL 3D (G)

Digital 3d Daily 12:20, 2:45, 5:00, 7:15, 9:40

### (500) DAYS OF SUMMER (PG, language may offend)

Daily 1:20, 3:45, 6:55, 9:30

### HARRY POTTER AND THE HALF BLOOD PRINCE (PG, violence, frightening scenes)

Daily 12:00, 3:15, 6:40, 10:05

### ICE AGE: DAWN OF THE DINOSAURS (G)

Digital 3d Daily 12:10, 2:40, 5:10, 7:35, 10:00

### TRANSFORMERS: REVENGE OF THE FALLEN (PG, violence, crude content, not recommended for young children)

Daily 12:15, 3:30

### THE PROPOSAL (PG, coarse language)

Daily 9:55

### THE HANGOVER (18A, language may offend, nudity, crude content)

Daily 1:10, 3:50, 7:10

## CITY CENTRE 9

10200-102 Ave, 780.421.7020

### G.I. JOE: THE RISE OF COBRA (14A)

No passes, Stadium Seating, Fri-Sun 12:15, 3:30, 7:30, 10:15

Stadium Seating, Mon-Thu 12:15, 3:30, 7:30, 10:15

### DISTRICT 9 (14A, brutal violence, gory scenes, coarse language)

Stadium Seating, No passes, Daily 12:20, 3:15, 6:40, 9:20

### TIME TRAVELLER'S WIFE (PG, nudity, mature subject matter)

Stadium Seating, Dolby Stereo Digital, Daily 12:30, 3:20, 6:45, 9:30

### JULIE AND JULIA (PG, coarse language)

DTS Digital, Stadium Seating, No passes, Fri-Sun 12:10, 3:10, 6:50, 9:40; Mon-Thu 12:10, 3:10, 6:50, 9:40

### FUNNY PEOPLE (14A, crude coarse language, sexual content, not recommended for children)

Stadium Seating, Dolby Stereo Digital, Daily 3:00, 6:30, 9:15

### HARRY POTTER AND THE HALF BLOOD PRINCE (PG, violence, frightening scenes)

Stadium Seating, Daily 12:00

### THE UGLY TRUTH (14A, sexual content, language may offend)

Stadium Seating, Dolby Stereo Digital, Fri, Sun-Thu 1:00, 4:00, 7:20, 10:10; Sat 4:00, 7:20, 10:10

### (500) DAYS OF SUMMER (PG, language may offend)

Stadium Seating, Dolby Stereo Digital, Daily 12:50, 3:50, 7:15, 10:00

### THE GOODS: LIVE HARD, SELL HARD (18A)

Stadium Seating, Dolby Stereo Digital, Daily 12:45, 3:45, 7:00, 9:15

### SPREAD (18A, nudity, sexual content)

Dolby Stereo Digital, Stadium Seating, Daily 12:40, 3:40, 7:10, 9:50

### OPUS ARTE: A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM (Classification not available)

Digital Presentation Sat 11:00

## CLAREVIEW 10

4271-139 Ave, 780.472.7600

### HARRY POTTER AND THE HALF BLOOD PRINCE (PG, violence, frightening scenes)

Daily 12:40, 4:20, 6:45

### THE UGLY TRUTH (14A, sexual content, language may offend)

Daily 1:40, 4:40, 7:15, 9:35

### FUNNY PEOPLE (14A, crude coarse language, sexual content, not recommended for children)

Daily 9:25

### G.I. JOE: THE RISE OF COBRA (14A)

No passes, Fri-Sun 12:30, 1:10, 3:30, 4:00, 6:30, 7:05, 9:20, 9:50; Mon-Thu 12:30, 1:10, 3:30, 4:00, 6:30, 7:05, 9:20, 9:50

### JULIE AND JULIA (PG, coarse language)

No passes, Fri-Sun 12:45, 3:50, 6:55, 9:45; Mon-Thu 12:45, 3:50, 6:55, 9:45

### A PERFECT GETAWAY (18A, gory violence)

Daily 1:20, 4:30, 7:00

### DISTRICT 9 (14A, brutal violence, gory scenes, coarse language)

No passes, Daily 1:00, 3:45, 6:45, 9:40

### THE GOODS: LIVE HARD, SELL HARD (18A)

Daily 2:00, 4:50, 7:25, 10:00

### BANDSLAM (PG)

Daily 12:50, 3:40, 6:40, 9:15

### TIME TRAVELLER'S WIFE (PG, nudity, mature subject matter)

Daily 1:30, 4:10, 6:50, 9:30

## DUGGAN CINEMA - CAMROSE

6601-48 Ave, Camrose, 780.608.2144

### THE UGLY TRUTH (14A, sexual content, language may offend)

Daily 7:20 9:20; Sat, Sun, Tue, Thu 2:20

### ALIENS IN THE ATTIC (PG)

Daily 7:00; Sat, Sun, Tue, Thu 2:00

### FUNNY PEOPLE (14A, crude coarse language, sexual content, not recommended for children)

Daily 9:00

### JULIE AND JULIA (PG, coarse language)

Daily 7:05, 9:15; Sat, Sun, Tue, Thu 2:05

### TIME TRAVELLER'S WIFE (PG, nudity, mature subject matter)

Daily 7:00 9:10; Sat, Sun, Tue 2:00; Movies for Mommies: Thu, Aug 20, 1:00

## GALAXY - SHERWOOD PARK

2020 Sherwood Drive, 780.416.0750

### THE GOODS: LIVE HARD, SELL HARD (18A)

No passes Daily 1:30, 4:40, 7:40, 10:35

### DISTRICT 9 (14A, brutal violence, gory scenes, coarse language)

No passes Daily 12:30, 3:30, 7:20, 10:15

### BANDSLAM (PG)

Daily 12:20, 3:20, 6:55, 9:30

### TIME TRAVELLER'S WIFE (PG, nudity, mature subject matter)

Daily 12:20, 4:10, 7:10, 10:00

### A PERFECT GETAWAY (18A, gory violence)

Daily 9:15

### G.I. JOE: THE RISE OF COBRA (14A)

Daily 1:15, 4:30, 7:30, 10:30

### JULIE AND JULIA (PG, coarse language)

No passes Daily 12:40, 4:00, 7:00, 9:50

### FUNNY PEOPLE (14A, crude coarse language, sexual content, not recommended for children)

Daily 12:00, 3:15, 6:45, 9:55

### THE UGLY TRUTH (14A, sexual content, language may offend)

Daily 1:00, 3:50, 6:40, 9:20

### G-FORCE (G)

Daily 12:50, 4:20, 6:50

### HARRY POTTER AND THE HALF BLOOD PRINCE (PG, violence, frightening scenes)

Daily 1:50, 3:00, 6:30, 9:45

## GRANDIN THEATRE

Grandin Mall, Sir Winston Churchill Ave, St. Albert, 780.458.9422

### G FORCE (G)

Daily 1:05, 2:50, 4:35, 6:30

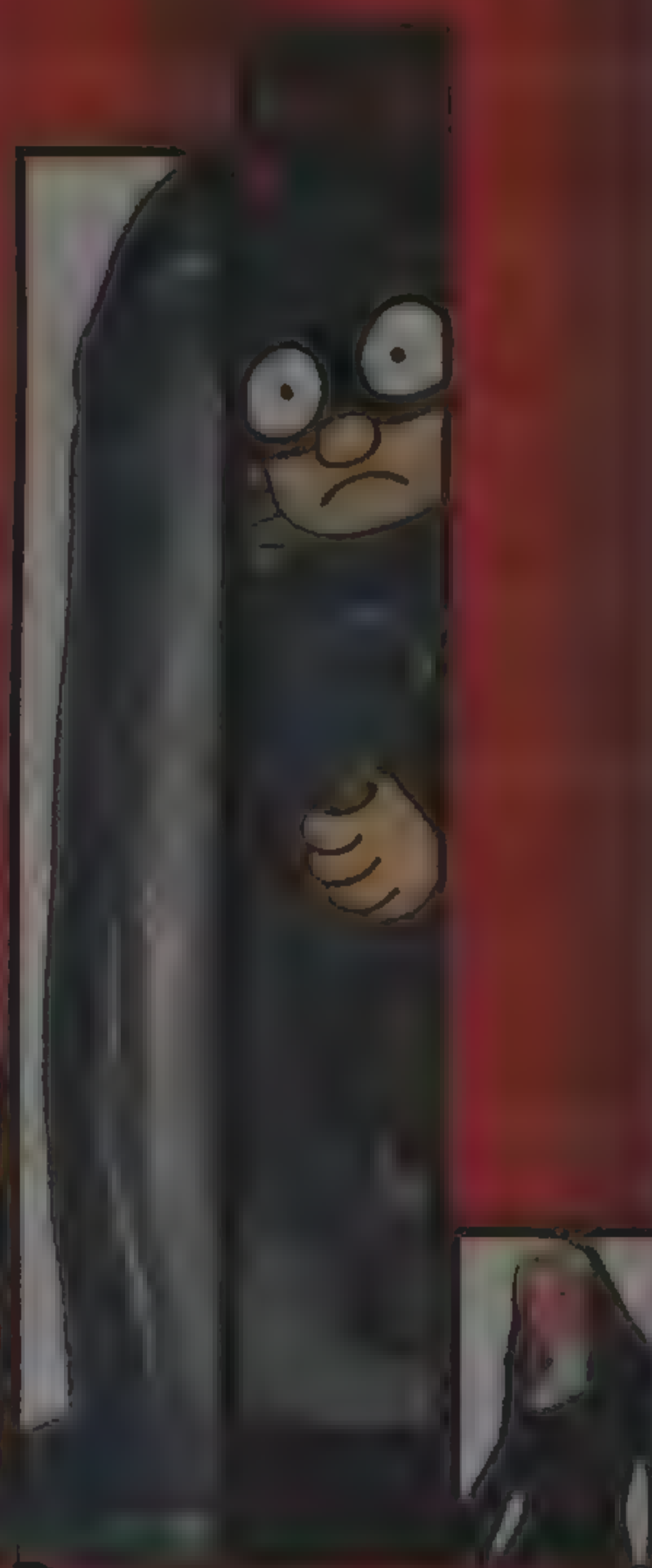
### G.I. JOE RISE OF THE COBRA (14A)



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## FILM REVIEWS

### Film Capsules

<< CONTINUED FROM PAGE 41

because it's non-existent. Its consequences are relatable and yet the source is safely removed from anything that would be too close to home for viewers. It could be argued that this detachment is too safe and avoids subject matter that would have real reverberance, but it's an ingenious gimmick nonetheless.

DAVID BERBY

// DAVID@VUEWEEKLY.COM

### Now playing

#### G.I. Joe: The Rise of Cobra

Directed by Stephen Sommers

Written by Stuart Beattie, David Elliot, Paul Lovett

Starring Channing Tatum, Marlon Wayans

★★★★☆

Stephen Sommers takes a lot of shit for being a pretty mindless director from the Michael Bay school, one of those fellows obsessed with CGI and explosions and who uses a camera that's evidently powered by kinetic energy, so rarely does it stop whizzing around. And, well, fair enough: *The Mummy* and its sequels are notably cheesy and stupid even for big dumb blockbusters, and *Van Helsing* is certainly in the conversation for one of the worst action movies of the 2000s, not exactly a category with a dearth of options.

But though it would be a stretch to say this hyper, purposefully clueless brand of filmmaking really helps *G.I. Joe: The Rise of Cobra*, it certainly doesn't hurt. I might even go so far as to say that, considering we're dealing with an update on a toy franchise/animated show that was almost a parody of itself—Cobra's world-takeover schemes on that bit of nostalgia included, I'm not kidding, fast food joints with rockets on top of them, mind-control gum and an evil telethon—Sommers' brand of campy kineticism is probably the only appropriate course of action. I mean, really, are you going to offer the world a pop treatise on nihilism when your primary villains are metal-faced megalomaniacs who live in submarine lairs?

The advantage it has over that other '80s toy franchise is at least some kind of vague self-awareness of how ridiculous it really is, and though it doesn't do much to undercut that or elevate itself, there's something to be said for the blunt honesty of saying, "Hey, let's go watch some high-tech supermen blow the shit out of elaborate CGI stuff." It's kind of like updating '70s/'80s James Bond, without the style or sex. The plot revolves around the Joes trying to put a stop to the nefarious James McCullen's (eventually to become the chrome-domed Destro) plan to destroy the world with the help of their new recruits, übersoldier Duke (Channing Tatum) and comic relief Ripcord (Marlon Wayans, whose actually not as annoying as you'd assume). There's an attempt to create a tangled web of intrigue in there, but it's rarely given enough space to breathe among the action sequences, which range from reasonably thrilling—a foot/car chase through Paris—to so CGI-choked they're impossible to get into, the worst example being the final assault on McCullen's fortress.

It ain't art, or even a particularly good blockbuster, but it's breezy and barely self-reflexive enough—the winking asides to its toy/cartoon past are legion—to at least not make its two hours drag. Which is probably all you can ask of a 3.5-inch super soldier, accessories sold separately.

DAVID BERBY

// DAVID@VUEWEEKLY.COM

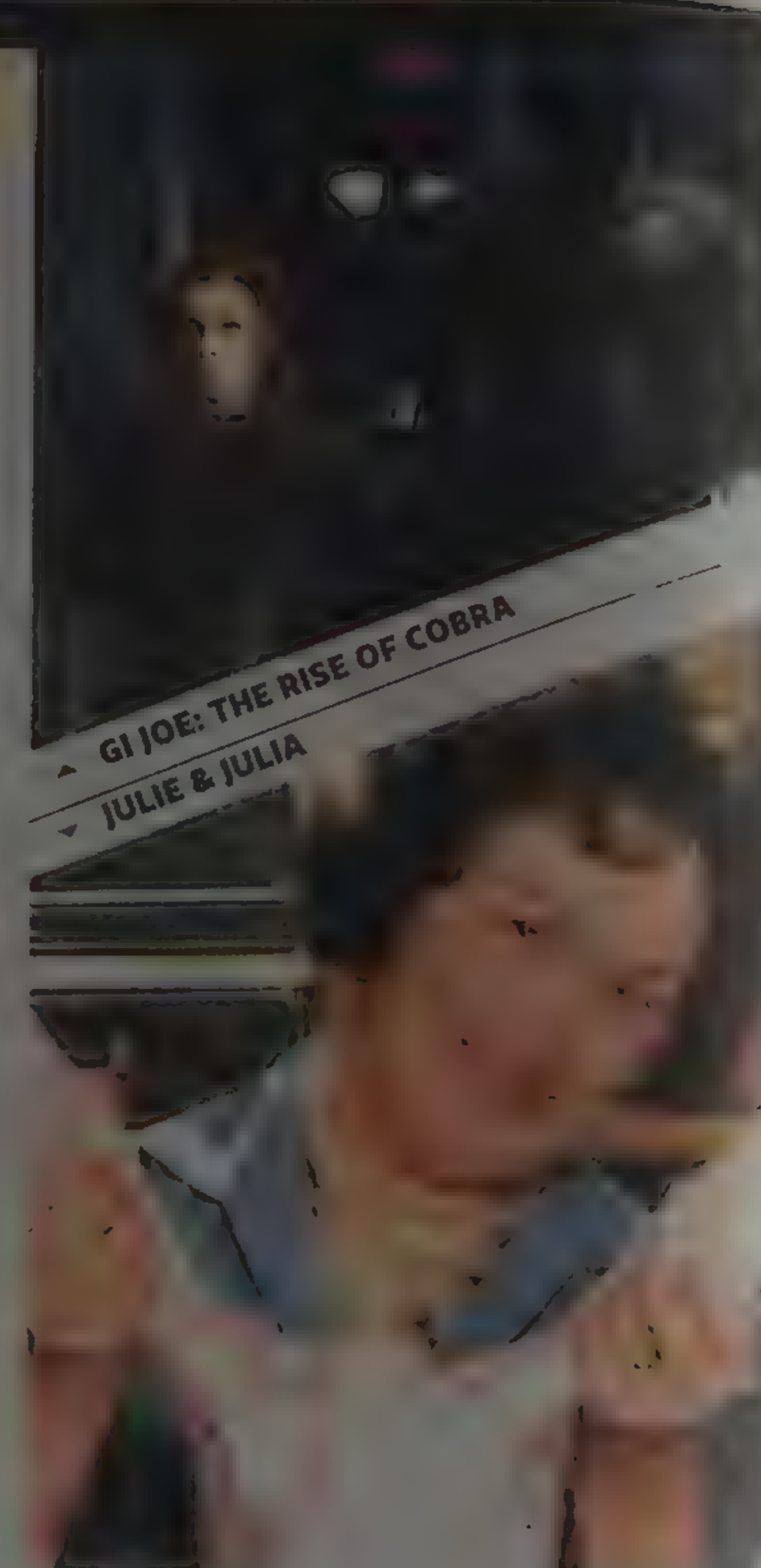
#### Julie & Julia

Written & directed by Nora Ephron

Starring Meryl Streep, Amy Adams, Stanley Tucci

★★★★☆

We start with two Americans in postwar Paris, Julia (Meryl Streep) and Paul Child (Stanley Tucci), ardent foodies and happy in mid-life love, swooning over the richness of their new culinary and cultural digs while Paul shows his photos and continues his



diplomatic career and Julia figures out what to do with her life between mouth-watering meals and afternoon delights—healthy appetites in the kitchen are matched, we learn, in the bedroom. Tucci's terrific as always while Streep goes beyond deft impersonation, at her comic best and captivatingly sensual, in a goofy sort of way. So far, so good. Or at the very least effortlessly diverting. If only it weren't for the other half of the movie.

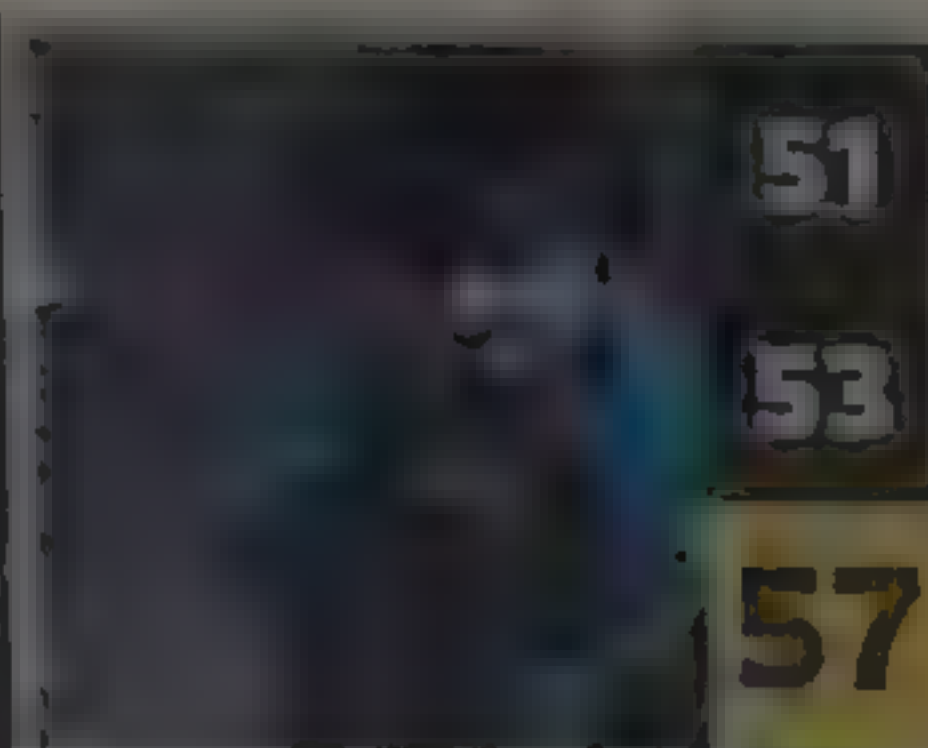
Nora Ephron's *Julie & Julia* isn't a bio-pic about Julia Child but rather an attempt to craft a diptych from two separate stories of self-realization, that of Child's discovery of her finesse with cuisine and charisma with instruction and of Queens-based Julie Powell (Amy Adams) and her discovery that maybe she really is the writer she always dreamed she'd be. To say that the former trajectory overshadows the latter would be a gross understatement. Child is a beloved and singular cultural icon and influential author. Powell started a hit blog based on following Child's recipes. More to the point, Streep and Tucci's portrait of marriage is moving, complex and resonant, bursting with unspoken negotiations between lovers who convey an ample sense of history both separate and as a unit. The sense of togetherness found between Adams and Chris Messina, who plays Julie's amiably Tony Danza-like husband Eric, is by contrast vacuous, propped up by tedious boilerplate squabbles and cuddling on the couch. It doesn't help that Julie herself, characterized here, as openly self-centered and seemingly without much of anything of her own to say, is basically insufferable. And it takes some-pretty lousy writing to make Amy Adams insufferable.

The concept of *Julie & Julia* is, I think, inherently flawed, and Ephron's method of connecting Child's memoir *My Life in France* with Powell's book is largely facile and undernourished. Their stories evoke parallels in only the most obvious ways, and Ephron has a tough time sculpting a satisfying movie out of either of them. The imbalance is exacerbated by stereotypical romanticizing of Paris and dismissal of dreary old Queens, which, granted, is hardly the most beautiful of the five boroughs, but isn't without its appeal either. *Julie & Julia* seems all too content to stay on the surface of things, to be all glaze and no filling, and it largely comes down to Streep, Tucci and a few other stellar co-stars to make this at least half of a good movie.

JOSEF BRAUN

// JOSEF@VUEWEEKLY.COM





51 Manchester Orchestra

53 Dream Theater

57 Unrest Fest



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How Sounds online

More album reviews online, Monday to Friday

Vuefinder

Live show slide shows. This week: Edmonton Folk Music Festival

REVUE // BEN STEVENSON

## The boy is back in town

Ben Stevenson returns with a new band for hometown gigs

BY EDEN MUNRO

When Ben Stevenson hits the Starlite Room stage to open for Bedouin Soundclash Thursday night, it will be a homecoming of sorts. Formerly of Edmonton's punk band Our Mercury, he's now living in Toronto, fronting a soul project under his own name. And as easy as it would be to call this a departure, there are many aspects of his career that are finally coming full-circle.

"Yeah, I'm doing a throwback soul thing," he nods, before adding, "but near the end [of Our Mercury], we had started to gravitate towards [urban music] and very little rock music at all. We were one of those bands that listened to records together and vibed on the same thing."

For my tastes, when it comes to record production, the '60s was probably the best in the late '60s," he adds. "After that, it didn't really get better. That's the quality that people really want today anyways."

For Stevenson, there's a magic in the nuances that come from recording methods that don't gloss over the feel of a session.

"When I listen to Sam Cooke, I can see him singing when I close my eyes. You don't get that nowadays—auto-tuning puts a wall there," he explains. "I find digital recording is disappointing me more and more. Singing to tape makes your voice sound better than to a computer. I guess I still feel like a luddite, but music should be hard. When I'm recording, I should be sweating my parts. That's the craft of it for me."

I'm not necessarily trying to sound like a record from the '60s; I'd just like to make a record that was made that way."

When Stevenson enters the studio in October to record his new album, he'll be working with soul producer Charlie Chalmers, who has worked with legends like Aretha Franklin and Al Green. Stevenson will be doing things "the hard way"—recording to tape, not a hard drive—and learning to trust his instincts.

"I've been in a band since I was 13 years old, so it's nice to be on my own, in a way," he considers. "It's difficult in other ways. Artistically, you second-guess yourself more. Finding that confidence on your own, it's a lot harder. Slowly, I'm building a confidence that I didn't need when I was in a five-man band."

"I feel like I'm really being supported by my Edmonton family and friends, and it's really appreciated," he continues. "My friends on this tour are lending me equipment, all kinds of support and encouraging words. The Bedouin [Soundclash] guys pushed to get me on this tour, and [manager] Dave Guentette, who's just an awesome guy."

At the end of the day, however, it's been



**SOUL SURVIVOR** >> Ben Stevenson rehearses back in E-Town after the demise of Our Mercury and a move to Toronto // Eden Munro



**NO MIXED SIGNALS** >> Michael Rault, Joseph Lubinsky-Mast and Donovan Rambaran locked in the groove // Eden Munro

Stevenson's own work ethic that has allowed him to make the jump from band member to solo artist, from punk rocker to soul singer. When I ask him about how punk ethics informed his approach to soul music, the grown-up punk grins.

"In part it's in my own nature, which is probably what brought me to punk rock in the first place. Like Feist, she does things the same way. You listen to her latest record, and you can hear the same thing."

"The whole world made sense the first time I heard the Clash, but now, I get

that from Sam Cooke. It's a different energy, but that feeling hasn't changed for me." V

BEN STEVENSON  
TUES. AUG. 11 (8 PM)  
WITH BEDOUIN SOUNDCLASH  
STARLITE ROOM, \$10

EDEN MUNRO  
WITH MICHAEL RAULT, JOSEPH LUBINSKY-MAST  
AND DONOVAN RAMBARAN  
ANTHERY, \$10



BEN STEVENSON PERFORMS LIVE AT VUE WEEKLY



**TAKE A TURN** >> Drummer Maxwell Roach tries out the keys



**BACK IN BUSINESS** >> Michael Shand gets back to his keys // Eden Munro



**THE SHOW BEGINS** >> Stevenson and his band perform an intimate show in the Vue Weekly studio // Eden Munro



# Pawn Shop

10551-82 Avenue (Upstairs!)  
780-432-5058

## GRAND ANALOG LIONESS

AUGUST 13-THE PAWN SHOP WITH GUESTS

## THE SWIFTYS

DARREK ANDERSON  
ROGER MARIN BAND  
GORDIE TENTREES

## CLUB

PARACHUTE PENGUIN  
Sunset Trip

www.pawnshoplive.ca

## UPCOMING

### AUGUST 13

UNION EVENTS PRESENTS

## GRAND ANALOG & LIONESS

### AUGUST 14

## THE SWIFTY'S

DARREK ANDERSON  
ROGER MARIN BAND  
& GORDIE TENTREES

### AUGUST 15

ARTICLUB SATURDAYS

## PARACHUTE PENGUIN & SUNSET TRIP

### AUGUST 21

MOD CLUB PRESENTS

## HEATWAVE

SUMMER DANCE PARTY  
FREE BEFORE 10PM

### AUGUST 28

CD RELEASE PARTY

## HEADBAND

THE WHITSUNDAYS  
BOINGBOING  
& HANG LOOSE

# MUSIC WEEKLY

SEND YOUR FREE LISTINGS TO 780.426.2889  
DEADLINE: FRIDAY AT 3PM

## THURSDAY

**ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL** Duff Robison  
**BLUES ON WHYTE** John Campbell John  
**CHRISTOPHER'S PARTY PUB** Open stage hosted by Alberta Crude; 6-10pm  
**COAST TO COAST** Open mic at the pub; hip hop open mic every Thursday night with host Yak Dollaz  
**COWBOY POETRY AND COUNTRY MUSIC FESTIVAL** Stony Plain Sourdough Slim and the Command Sisters; 7:30pm; \$15 (Thu feature show); \$60 (weekend pass)  
**CROWN AND ANCHOR** Sallys Krackers; no cover  
**CROWN PUB** Drum and Bass, Dub Step, Hip Hop, Break beats; 9pm  
**DUSTER'S** Thursday open jam hosted by The Assassins of youth (blues/rock); 9pm; no cover  
**DVB** Open mic Thursdays  
**EARLY STAGE SALOON** Sue Harris, Gentleman Ed Brown, Stewart MacDougall  
**EDMONTON EVENT CENTRE** Busta Rhymes featuring Belly and Peter Jackson; 8pm  
**ENCORE CLUB** Industry Music and Networking Night; \$10  
**HAVEN** Open jam, 6:30pm; Fools Tongue and Angus Wilson (jazz); White Lightning, Stoning Mary; 8pm; \$10  
**JAMMERS** Thursday open jam; 7-11pm  
**JAZZ AT THE LAKE-Sylvan Lake** Sylvan Lake Golf & Country Club Tournament House: Johnny Summers' Little Big Band Concert and Swing  
**L.B.'S** Open jam with Ken Skoreyko; 9pm  
**LIVE WIRE** Open Stage Thursdays with Gary Thomas  
**MEAD HALL** Destrution (hard industrial music)

**NEW CITY SUBURBS** Bingo at 9:30pm followed by Electroshock Therapy with Dervish Nazz Nomad and Plan B (electro, retro)  
**ON THE ROCKS** Thursdays: Dance lessons at 8pm; Salsa DJ to follow  
**OVERTIME SOUTH** New: classic rock, R&B, urban and dance with DJ Mikee; 9pm-12am; no cover  
**PLANET INDIGO** R Thursdays: breaks, electro house spun with PI residents  
**RENDEZVOUS** Metal Thursday with org666  
**SEMI-TECHNO** and The Techno Hippy Crew: Bassnectar, Kush Arora, Shamik and guests; 8pm  
**STOLL'S** Dancehall, hip hop with DJ Footnotes hosted by Elle Dirty and ConScience every Thu; 9pm  
**TEMPLE** Surely Temple Thursdays: with DJ Tron, DCD, Optimior Prime, Miyuru Fernando; 9pm (door); \$5 (cover)

**FRIDAY**  
**ARTERY** Ben Stevenson and his band, Michael Rault and guest; DJs High Plain Sounds (ex-members of The Operators 780); 8pm (door), 9pm (bands)  
**ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL** Duff Robison  
**BLUES ON WHYTE** John Campbell John  
**CARROT** Live music Fridays: Paul Cressey (folk); all ages; 7:30-9:30pm; \$5 (door)  
**CASINO EDMONTON** Alexander (Platters tribute)  
**CASINO YELLOWHEAD** Sugar (pop/rock)  
**CELTIC FESTIVAL** Stephen's Green, McCuaig, The Fables; hosted by Andy Donnelly; 5:30pm (gates); \$30/day at Scottish Imports, Ticketmaster  
**COAST TO COAST PUB** Open Stage every Friday night with host Leona Burkey at 9pm  
**COWBOY POETRY AND COUNTRY MUSIC FESTIVAL** Brett Kissel and Gary Hjelgaard; 7:30pm; \$25 (Fri feature show)  
**CROWN AND ANCHOR** Lucky (blues/roots); 9:30pm-11:55pm; no cover  
**DVB TAVERN** From 8:00pm

**LEVEL 2 LOUNGE** Dish Thursdays: funky house/techno with DJ Colin Hargreaves, house/breaks with DJ Krazy K, hardstyle/techno with DJ Decha, tech trance/electro with DJ Savage Garrett; no minors; no cover  
**NEW CITY SUBURBS** Bingo at 9:30pm followed by Electroshock Therapy with Dervish Nazz Nomad and Plan B (electro, retro)  
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**DVB TAVERN** From 8:00pm

**and The Southern Tents** with Los Diablos; 10pm \$6  
**EARLY STAGE SALOON** Sue Harris, Gentleman Ed Brown, Stewart MacDougall  
**EDDIE SHORTS** The Boogie Patrol featuring Rotten Dan (blues)  
**EDMONTON EVENT CENTRE** Silversun Pickups, Manchester Orchestra, Cage the Elephant; all ages; 8pm; \$28.50 at TicketMaster  
**FRESH START CAFE** Live music Fridays: 7-10pm; \$5  
**HAVEN** O' Darling with Mandy and Chris (folk); 10pm; \$10  
**HYDEAWAY** The Playing Cards, guests; 7:30pm  
**IRISH CLUB** Jam session; 8pm; no cover  
**IVORY CLUB** Duelling piano show with Jesse, Shane, Tiffany and Enk and guests  
**JAZZ AT THE LAKE-Sylvan Lake** Stevenson Performing Arts Centre: Legendary Oliver Jones Trio; Lions Hall: Lions Late Night jazz club after the evening performances  
**JEFFREY'S** Shanon Graham (jazz sax); \$10  
**JEKYLL AND HYDE PUB** Every Friday: Headwind (classic pop/rock); 9pm; no cover  
**JET NIGHTCLUB** Acronycal, White Lightning, Cold Driven; 9pm (door), 9:30pm (show); \$10  
**LEVA CASINO** Live music every Fri  
**MEAD HALL** Burning Sands, Aerocar Model Four, Future Echoes, Euphonic (rock)  
**NEW CITY SUBURBS** Bingo at 9:30pm followed by Electroshock Therapy with Dervish Nazz Nomad and Plan B (electro, retro)  
**ON THE ROCKS** The Mishaps with DJ Crazy Dave  
**180 DEGREES** Sexy Friday night every Friday  
**PALACE CASINO** Live music every Fri  
**PAWN SHOP** The Swiftys, Derek Anderson, Roger Marin Band, Gordon Tentrees; 8pm; \$10  
**RED PIANO BAR** duelling piano show featuring the Red Piano Players; 9pm-12am  
**SOBEYS-Jasper Ave** Jeff Antoniu Trio (jazz); 5-8pm  
**STARLITE ROOM** Red Jumpsuit Apparatus, Monty Arei; 7pm; \$23.50 at TicketMaster, Blackbyrd  
**STEEPS**-Old Glenora Live

**Music Fridays** Adam Holm (indie); 8:30-10:30pm; no cover  
**TOM GOODCHILD'S MOOSE FACTORY RESTAURANT** Hot Jazz Fridays: featuring Brett Harris and his trio  
**URBAN LOUNGE** Mustard Smile  
**WILD WEST SALOON** Gary Shade  
**X-WRECK'S** Slowburn; 8pm; 9pm  
**DJs**  
**AZUCAR PICANTE** Every Fri: Papi and DJ Latin Sensation  
**BANK ULTRA LOUNGE** Connected Fridays: 9:17 The Bounce, Nestor Delano, Luke Morrison  
**BAR-B-BAR** DJ James; no cover  
**BAR WILD** Bar Wild Fridays  
**BLACK DOG** Friday DJs spin Woodfist and Main Floor: 8pm-11pm jams with Nevine-indie, soul, motown, new wave, electro Underdog: Perverted Fridays: Punk and Ska from the '60s '70s and '80s with Fathead  
**BOOTS** Retro Disco, retro DJs  
**BUDDY'S** DJ Arrow Chaser; 8pm; no cover before 10pm  
**CHROME LOUNGE** Live music VIP Fridays  
**EMPIRE BALLROOM** Rock, hip hop, house, mash up; no minors  
**ESMERELDA'S** Every Friday: Frenzy Fridays: Playing the best in country  
**FUNKY BUDDHA**-Whyte Ave Top tracks, rock, retro with DJ Damian  
**GAS PUMP** Top 40/dance with DJ Christian  
**GINGUR** Flossin' Fridays: with Bomb Squad, DJ Solja, weekly guest DJs  
**LEVEL 2 LOUNGE** Hypnotic Friday: Breakbeat, house, progressive and electro with Groovy Curvy, DJ Funze  
**NEWCASTLE PUB** Fridays House, dance mix with DJ Donovan  
**NEW CITY LIKWID LOUNGE** DJ Anarchy Adam (Punk)  
**PLAY NIGHTCLUB** Live music for the queer community to open in a decade with DJ's Alex Brown and Eddie Toonflash; 9pm (door); \$5 www.playnightclub.ca  
**RED STAR** Movin' on Up Fridays indie, rock, funk, soul, hip hop

## VENUE GUIDE

- ARTERY** 9535 Jasper Ave. • **ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL** 7704 Calgary Trail South, 780.432.4611 • **AVENUE THEATRE** 9030-118 Ave, 780.477.2149 • **AXIS** 10349 Jasper Ave, 780.990.0031 • **BANK ULTRA LOUNGE** 10765 Jasper Ave, 780.420.9098 • **BILLY BOB'S** Continental Inn, 16625 Stony Plain Rd, 780.484.7752 • **BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE** 10425-82 Ave, 780.439.2082
- BLUES ON WHYTE** 10329-82 Ave, 780.439.3981 • **BOOTS** 10242-106 St, 780.423.5014 • **BRDXX** 10030-102 St (downstairs), 780.428.1099 • **BUDDY'S** 11725 Jasper Ave, 780.488.6636 • **CASINO EDMONTON** 7055 Argyle Rd, 780.463.9467 • **CASINO YELLOWHEAD** 12464-153 St, 780.424.9467 • **CELTIC FESTIVAL** Hawrelak Park Amphitheatre, 9330 Groat Rd, 780.700.8781 • **CHRISTOPHER'S PARTY PUB** 2021 Millbourne Rd, West, 780.462.6965 • **CHROME LOUNGE** 132 Ave, Victoria Trail • **COAST TO COAST** 5552 Calgary Trail, 780.439.8675 • **COPPERPOT RESTAURANT** Capital Place, 101, 9707-110 St, 780.452.7800 • **COWBOY POETRY AND COUNTRY MUSIC FESTIVAL** Stony Plain Exhibition Park, stonyplaincowboypoetry.com • **CROWN AND ANCHOR** 15277 Castledowns Rd, 780.472.7696 • **CROWN PUB** 10709-109 St, 780.428.5618 • **DIESEL ULTRA LOUNGE** 11845 Wayne Gretzky Drive, 780.704.4400 • **DEVANEY'S IRISH PUB** 9013-88 Ave • **DRUID** 11606 Jasper Ave, 780.454.9928 • **DUSTER'S** 6402-118 Ave, 780.474.5554 • **DVB TAVERN** 8307-99 St, www.DVBTAVERN.com • **EARLY STAGE SALOON** 4911-52 Ave, Stony Plain • **EASTWOOD FEST AND STREETDANCE** 118 Ave, 82 St to 87 St • Eastwood Park, 86 St and 118 Ave • **avenueinitiative.ca**
- EDMONTON EVENTS CENTRE** WEM Phase III, 780.489.SHOW • **EDMONTON QUEEN RIVERBOAT** 9734-98 Ave, 780.420.2757 • **ENCORE CLUB** 957 Fir St, Sherwood Park, 780.477.0111 • **FESTIVAL PLACE** 100 Festival Way, Sherwood Park, 780.449.3378, 780.464.2852 • **FIDDLER'S ROOST** 8906-99 St • **FILTHY MCNASTY'S** 10511-82 Ave, 780.916.1557 • **FLOW LOUNGE** 11815 Wayne Gretzky Dr, 780.604.4400 • **FLUID LOUNGE** 10105-109 St, 780.429.0700 • **FOXX DEN** 205 Carnegie Drive, St Albert • **FRESH START CAFE** Riverbend Sq, 780.433.9623 • **FUNKY BUDDHA** 10341-82 Ave, 780.433.9676 • **GAS PUMP** 10166-114 St, 780.488.4841 • **GINGUR SKY** 15505-118 Ave, 780.913.4312/780.953.3606 • **HALO** 10538 Jasper Ave, 780.423.HALO • **HAVEN** 15280A (basement), Stony Plain Rd, 780.756.6010 • **HILL TOP** 8220-106 Ave, 780.490.7359 • **HOOLIGANZ** 10704-124 St, 780.452.1168 • **HYDEAWAY** 10209-100 Ave • **IRON BOAR** 4911-51st St, Wetaskiwin • **IVORY CLUB** 2940 Calgary Trail South • **JAMMERS** 11948-127 Ave, 780.458.8779 • **JAZZ AT THE LAKE-Sylvan Lake** JazzAtTheLake.com • **JEFFREY'S** 964-142 St, 780.451.8890 • **JEKYLL AND HYDE** Riverview Inn, 10209-100 Ave, 780.426.5381 (pub)/780.429.5081 (rest) • **JET NIGHTCLUB** 9221-34 Ave, 780.466.6552 • **KAS BAR** 10444-82 Ave, 780.433.6768 • **L.B.'S** 23 Alkins Dr, St Albert, 780.460.9100 • **LEGENDS** 6104-172 St, 780.481.2786 • **LEVEL 2 LOUNGE** 11607 Jasper Ave, 2nd Fl, 780.447.4495 • **LIVE WIRE** 1107 Knottwood Dr East • **LOOP LOUNGE** 367 St Albert Rd, St Albert, 780.460.1122 • **MURRIETA'S** 10612-82 Ave • **NEWCASTLE PUB** 6108-90 Ave, 780.490.1999 • **NEW CITY** 10081 Jasper Ave, 780.989.5066 • **NIKKI DIAMONDS** 8130 Gateway Blvd, 780.439.8006 • **NORTH GLENORA HALL** 13335-109A Ave • **O'BYRNE'S** 10616-82 Ave, 780.414.6766 • **180 DEGREES** 10730-107 St, 780.414.0333 • **ON THE ROCKS** 11730 Jasper Ave, 780.482.4767 • **OVERTIME DOWNTOWN** 10304-111 St, 780.423.6493 • **OVERTIME SOUTH** Whitehead Crossing, 4212-106 St, 780.485.7177 • **PALACE CASINO** 10000-100 Ave, 780.477.2149 • **PARACHUTE PENGUIN** 10000-100 Ave, 780.477.2149 • **PLANET INDIGO** 10000-100 Ave, 780.477.2149 • **PLAY NIGHTCLUB** 10220-103 St • **PLEASANTVIEW COMMUNITY HALL** 10860-57 Ave • **PROHIBITION** 11026 Jasper Ave, 780.420.0448 • **RED PIANO BAR** 1698 Bourbon St, WEM, 8882-170 St, 780.486.7722 • **RED STAR** 10538 Jasper Ave, 780.428.0825 • **RENDEZVOUS** 10108-149 St • **ROCKSHOP** 16811-106 Ave, 780.444.7625 • **ROSEBOWL/ROUGE LOUNGE** 10111-117 St, 780.482.5253 • **ROSE AND CROWN** 10235-101 St • **SECOND CUP** Mountain Equipment 12336-102 Ave, 780.452.7574 • **SECOND CUP** Stanley Mainer Library 7 Sir Winston Churchill Sq • **SECOND CUP** Varscona Varscona Hotel, 106 St, Whyte Ave • **SIDELINERS** 11018-127 St, 453-6006 • **SOBEYS-Jasper Ave** 10404 Jasper Ave • **SOBEYS-College Plaza** 8225 112 St • **SORRENTINOS** South 4208 Calgary TR S, 780.434.7607 • **SPORTSWORLD** 13710-104 St • **STARLITE ROOM** 10030-102 St, 780.428.1099 • **STEEPS-College Plaza** 11116-82 Ave, 780.988.8105 • **STEEPS-Old Glenora** 12411 Stony Plain Rd, 780.488.1505 • **STOLL'S** 2nd Fl, 10368-82 Ave, 780.437.2293 • **SUEDE LOUNGE** 11246 Jasper Ave, 780.482.0707 • **TAPHOUSE** 9020 McKenney Ave, St Albert, 780.458.0860 • **TOM GOODCHILD'S MOOSE FACTORY RESTAURANT** 4810 Calgary Trail South, 780.437.5618 • **UNION HALL** Argyle, 99 St, 780.702.2582 • **URBAN LOUNGE** 10544-82 Ave, 780.437.7699 • **WESTWOOD UNITARIAN CHURCH** 11335-65 Ave • **WHISTLESTOP LOUNGE** 12416-113 Ave, 780.451.5506 • **WILD WEST SALOON** 12912-50 St, 780.476.3388 • **WUNDERBAR** 8120-101 St, 780.436.2286 • **X-WRECK'S** 9303-50 St, 780.466.8069 • **Y AFTERHOURS** 10028-102 St, 780.994.3256, www.yafterhours.com



MUSIC // 45



# EDMONTON EVENT CENTRE

**THU AUG 13**

**BUSTA RHYMES**

FEATURING BELLY & PETER JACKSON

**FRI AUG 14**

**SILVER SUN PICKUPS**

CALL THE ELEPHANT & MANCHESTER (EDMONTON)

ALL AGES • DOORS 8PM • TICKETS AT TICKETMASTER

**SAT AUG 29**

**KASCADE**

DOORS 9PM • TICKETS AT TICKETMASTER

**SAT SEP 13**

**KEANE**

**WED SEP 23**

**DragonForce**

ALL AGES 6PM SHOW

TICKETS AT TICKETMASTER

PRESENTED BY UNION EVENTS

**SAT SEP 26**

**GASLIGHT ANTHEM**

ALL AGES • 6PM SHOW

TICKETS AT TICKETMASTER

PRESENTED BY UNION EVENTS

**TUE SEP 29**

**motorhead**

TICKETS AT TICKETMASTER • PRESENTED BY UNION EVENTS

**UPCOMING SHOWS**

OCT 1: DEADMAUS & WOLFGANG PARTNER

OCT 23: MOBY • OCT 3: CHILDREN OF BODOM

#2556 8882-170 ST. {WEST EDM MALL} • 499-SHOW

EDMONTONEVENTCENTRE.CA

**ORLANDO'S 2** Sundays Open Stage (10-11:30pm) The Vindicators (blues/rock); 3-8pm

**RIVER CREE-The Venue** Clint Black (country)

**SECOND CUP-Mountain** Equipment Co-op Live music every Sun 12-4pm Saturdays

## DJs

**BACKSTAGE TAP AND GRILL** Industry Night with Atomic Improv, Jamecki and DJ Tim

**BLACK DOG** Sunday Afternoons: Phil, 2-7pm; Main Floor: Got To Give It Up: Funk, Soul, Motown, Disco with DJ Red Dawn

**BUDDY'S DJ** Bobby Beats; 9pm; Drag Queen Performance; no cover before 10pm

**FLOW LOUNGE** Stylus Sundays

**GINGUR** Ladies Industry Sundays

**NEW CITY SUBURBS** Get Down Sundays with Neighbourhood Rats

**OVER THE MOUNTAIN** Sunday Industry Night: Requests with DJ Bo

**SAVOY MARTINI LOUNGE** Reggae on Whyte: RnR Sundays with DJ IceMan; no minors; 9pm; no cover

**WUNDERBAR** Sundays DJ Gallateia and XS, guests; no cover

## MONDAY

**BLACK DOG** Sleeman Mondays: live music monthly; no cover

**BLUES ON WHYTE** King Muskafa

**DEVANEY'S** Open stage Mondays with different songwriters hosting each week; presented by Jimmy Whiffen of Hole in the Gutter Productions

**HAVEN** Jazz Night; 7pm; \$5 (door)/\$5 (student)

**NEW CITY** This Will Hurt you Mondays: Johnny Neck and his job present mystery musical guests

**NEW CITY** The Rocky Horror Show; 7pm (door), 8pm (show); followed by 'Rocky Horror Bingo' hosted by Dexter Nebula; \$12; all afterparties following the shows are free with Rocky Horror ticket stub from that days performance

**PLEASANTVIEW** COMMUNITY HALL Acoustic instrumental old time fiddle jam

**PROHIBITION** Chicka-Dee-Jay Monday Night: Soul, R&B, British Invasion, Ska, Rocksteady, and more with Michael Rault

**ROSE BOWL/ROUGE LOUNGE** The Legendary Rose Bowl Monday Jam: hosted by Sherry-Lee Wisor and Darrek Anderson; 8pm

**BAR WILD** Bar Gone Wild Mondays: Service Industry Night; no minors; 9pm-2am

**BLACK DOG** Main Floor: Eclectic Nonsense, Confederacy of Dunces, Dad Rock, TJ Hookah and Rear Admiral Saunders

**BUDDY'S DJ** Dust n' Time; 9pm

**ESMERALDA'S** Retro every Tue; no cover with student ID

**FUNKY BUDDHA-Whyte Ave** Latin and Salsa music, dance lessons 8-10pm

**GINGUR SKY** Bashment Tuesdays: Reggae music; Lil Wayne Young Jecky, Soulja Boy Drake after concert VIP party with Bomb Squad, The King Q.B., Black Empera, Rocky and War Chef; 11pm (door) \$10

**HAVEN** Tuesdays-Blackout: Electro beats with Electro DJ's Joust and So Serious

**NEW CITY** The Rocky Horror Show; 7pm (door), 8pm (show); followed by 'Rocky Horror Bingo' hosted by Dexter Nebula; \$12; all afterparties following

**PROHIBITION** Tuesday Punk Night

**RED STAR** Tuesdays: Experimental Indie Rock, Hip Hop, Electro with DJ Hot Philly

**WEDNESDAY**

the shows are free with Rocky Horror ticket stub from that days performance

**O'BYRNE'S** Celtic Jam with Shannon Johnson and friends

**REXALL PLACE** Lil Wayne, guests Young Jecky, Soulja Boy, Drake and Soulja Boy

**SECOND CUP-124 Street** Open mic every Tue; 8-10pm

**SECOND CUP-Stanley Miller Library** Open mic every Tue; 7-9pm

**SEDLINERS** Tuesday All Star Jam with Alicia Tait and Ruckey Sidecar; 8pm

**WESTWOOD UNITARIAN CHURCH** Tralool (traditional Celtic and Jewish music for fiddle and harp); Gal Shahr (fiddle), Sumita Staneslow (Celtic harp); 7pm; \$15 (single)/\$45 (family) call 780.436.4257/780.435.3366, or loishlund@shaw.ca for adv tickets

**DJs**

**BLACK DOG** Main Floor: CJSR's Eddie Lunchpail; Woolfip; with DJ Gundam

**BUDDY'S DJ** Arrow Chaser; 9pm

**ESMERALDA'S** Retro every Tue; no cover with student ID

**FUNKY BUDDHA-Whyte Ave** Latin and Salsa music, dance lessons 8-10pm

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**WEDNESDAY**

**BLACK DOG** Main Floor: Glitter once a month

**BLUES ON WHYTE** King Muskafa

**COPPERPOT RESTAURANT** Live jazz every Wednesday night; 7-9pm

**EDDIE SHORTS** Wed open stage, band oriented, hosted by Eddie Shorts; 9pm-12am

**FESTIVAL PLACE** Qualico Patio Series: Marv Machura Band, guest; 7:30pm; \$8 at Festival Place box office, TicketMaster

**FIDDLER'S ROOST** Little Flower Open Stage with Brian Gregg

**FOX DEN** The Mary Thomas Band Wed night open stage; 8pm-12am

**HAVEN** Open stage with Jonny Mac; 8:30pm; free

**HOOLOGANZ** Open stage Wednesdays hosted by Shane and Naomi

**LEVEL 2 LOUNGE** Open mic

**NEW CITY** The Rocky Horror Show; 7pm (door), 8pm (show); \$12; all afterparties following the shows are free with Rocky Horror ticket stub from that days performance

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**RED PIANO BAR** Jazz and Shiraz Wednesdays featuring Dave Babcock and his Jump Trio

**RIVER CREE** Wednesdays Live Rock Band hosted by Yukon Jack; 7:30-9pm

**ROCKSHOP** John Petrucci of Dream Theatre with John Myung (bass); 7:30pm; free

**SECOND CUP-Mountain**

**Equipment Open Mic** Wed, 8-10pm

**SHAW** 20th Anniversary Show: Progressive Nation, Dream Theatre, Zappa Family Unit, Band of Salvation, Beadrin, open (door); \$55-\$180 at TicketMaster; unionevents.com

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**DJs**

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EDEN MUNRO // [edenmunro.com](http://edenmunro.com)



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BOB CAGGS CLOSES THURSDAY NIGHT, FIRST OFFICIAL NIGHT OF THE FESTIVAL // Gravy



IRON AND WINE SINGS SOLO // ipractor



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JOE NOLAN ON THE MAINSTAGE // Gravy





STEVE EARLE ACOUSTIC AND NOT A DJ IN SIGHT // *Photo: [unreadable]*



TONY DEKKER AND JOEL PLASKETT SING TOGETHER ON CKUA // *Bryan [unreadable]*



CHUM BAWAMBA GETS BACK UP AGAIN // *Rub Butz*



THE WAILERS ROCK STEADY // *Gravy*



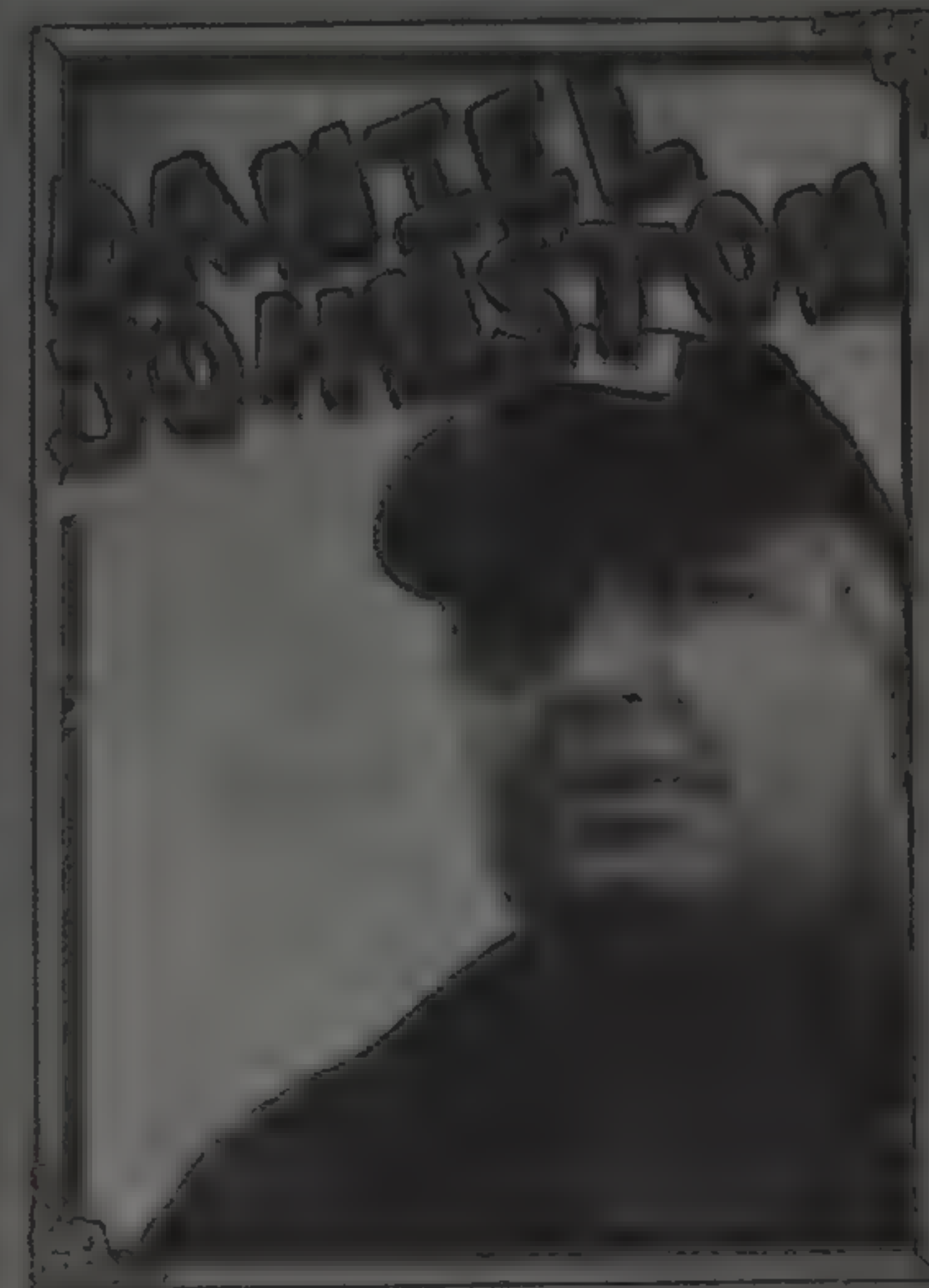
LUKE DOUCET WAILS ALONG WITH SARAH MCLACHLAN // *Gravy*



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# Sweet and lowdown

Orchestra finds inspiration in Woody Allen's neuroses



HEATHENS? >> Nah, they just like good music. —Bryant

BRYAN BIRTLES  
// BRYAN@VUEWEEKLY.COM

With two EPs and one full-length album released in 2009, Atlanta's Manchester Orchestra has been quite the busy band. Not content to release things the old-fashioned way, the group's plethora of releases have taken a decidedly innovative turn. Releasing a few singles through websites like AbsolutePunk.net and spin.com prior to the album's release, the groups' full-length *Mean Everything to Nothing* was released officially in April, but not before fans

had a one-day window of opportunity to purchase the album coupled with a limited-edition EP entitled *Fourteen Years of Excellence*. More recently, Manchester Orchestra released another EP through the MySpace Transmissions series, which is run by the social networking website and has also featured the likes of City and Colour, Vampire Weekend and NOFX.

As keyboardist Chris Freeman explains, part of the reason the band has had so many releases this year is that Manchester Orchestra recently set up a studio in the group's practice space, meaning

that the members are constantly coming up with ideas and recording them.

"As a band when we're at home we like to write a lot—we just got our own studio, actually," he says. "So, we try to write all the time and I think we just try to come up with innovative ways to release all the crap that we do all the time. We're constantly in the studio, it's kind of like our little clubhouse now—whether it's solo projects or Manchester stuff or just goofy shit that we like doing, if we can come up with cool ways to put it out then we will."

That feeling of freedom has been a driving force in the band's development, Freeman explains. Growing up in the south and in a strict and religious

environment, the frustrations of that time period manifest themselves not only in the band's lifestyle but also in its music. The band considers Woody Allen a major influence because of his bleak worldview, and the songs reflect the outlook Allen has.

"The way that Woody Allen deals with death and love and people and how awful they can be and there's not that much redemption in a lot of Woody Allen films and I think that definitely affects our brain, especially growing up in a very Christian environment and then seeing this very bleak, negative outlook on a lot of subjects in life," Freeman says. "We were all raised very Christian and we all went to private school and I wasn't allowed to listen to any non-Christian

music—I had to sneak my first non-Christian records around. It was a very Christian environment for all of us. Especially growing up in the South it was a very big part of our lives, and it's still a big part of my life, it's just that we've been able to have our eyes opened a bit that the rest of the world has better music than the Christian world and that we can live in the rest of the world without becoming complete heathens, I suppose, as our parents would say." **V**

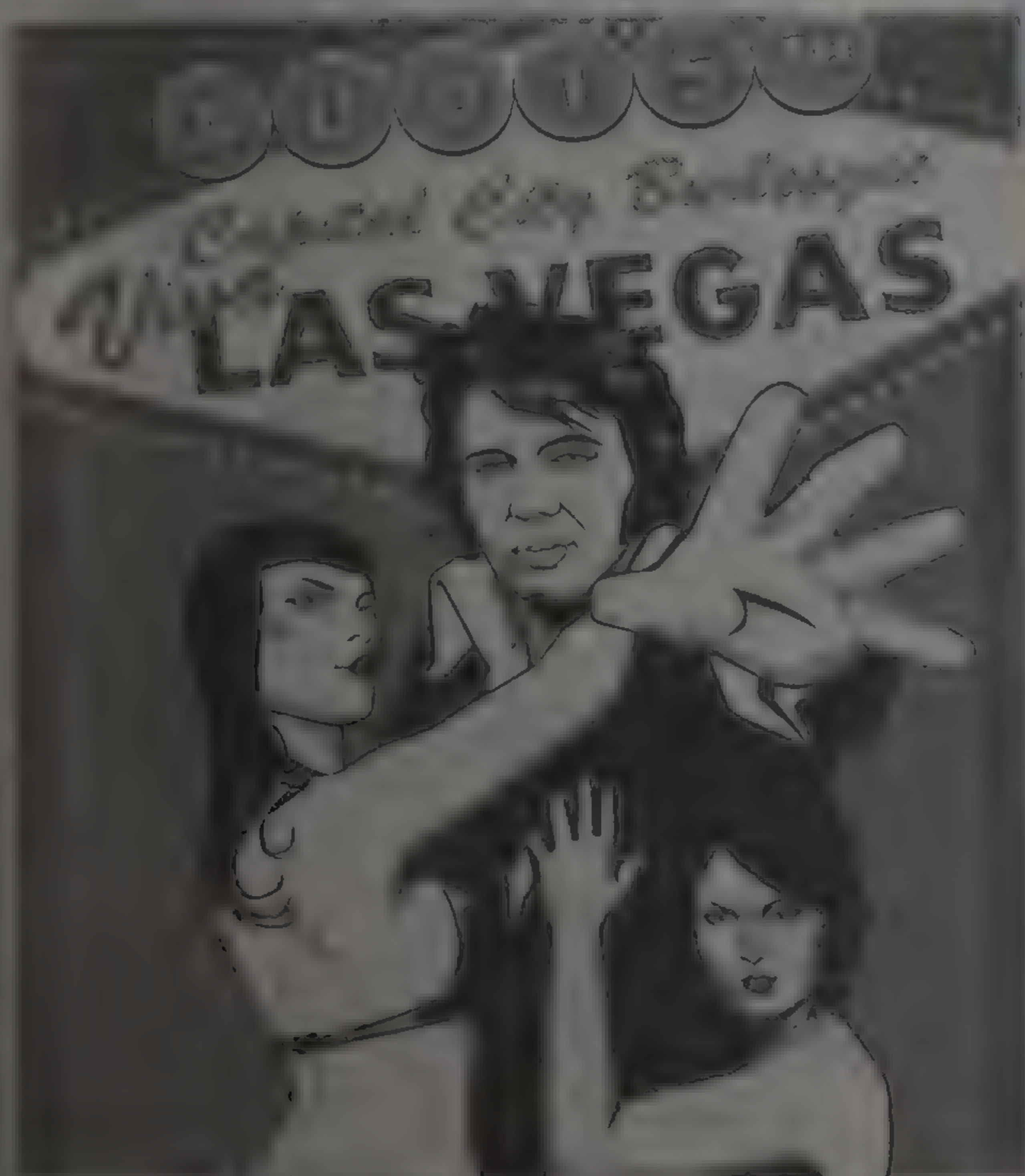
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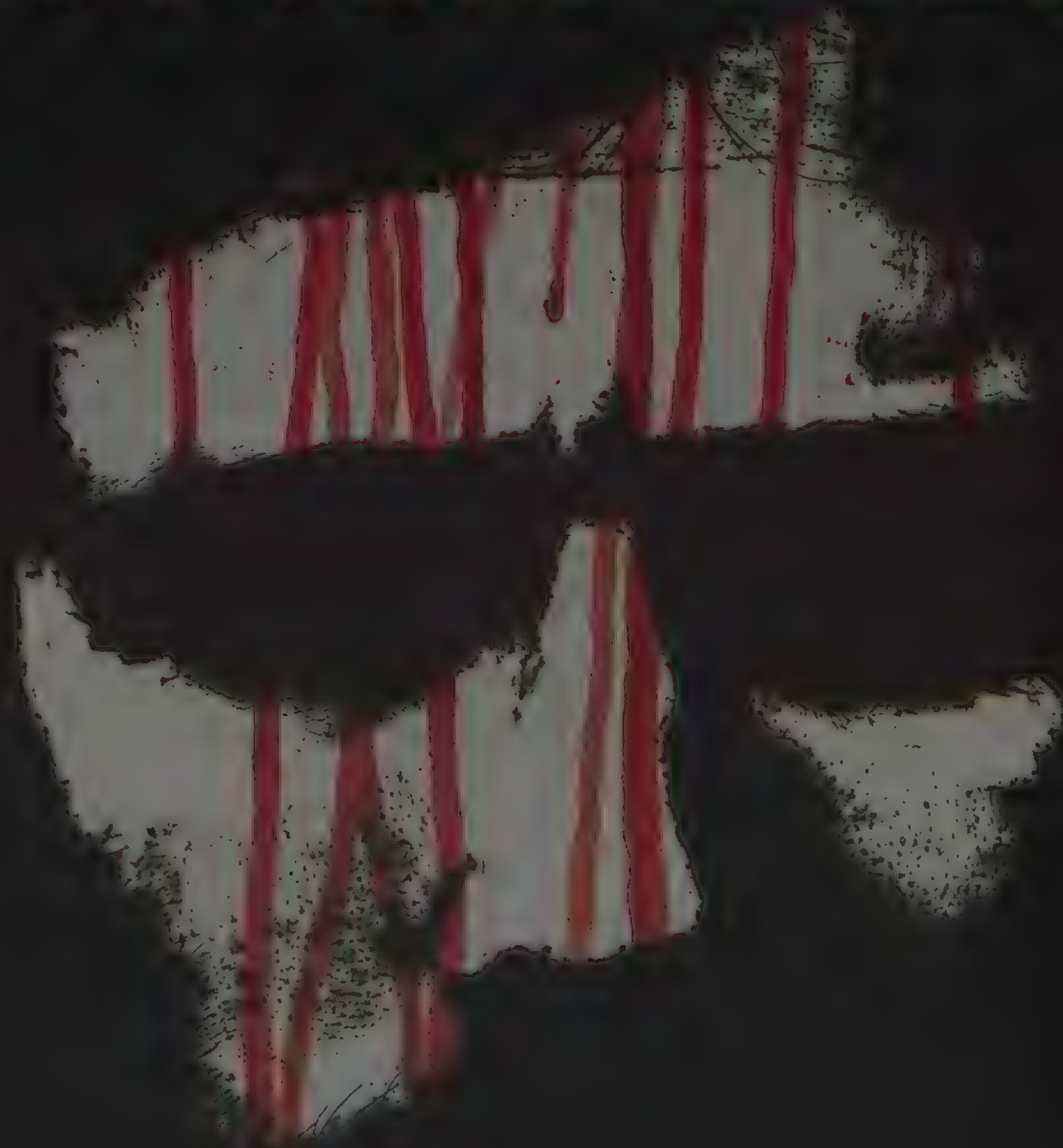
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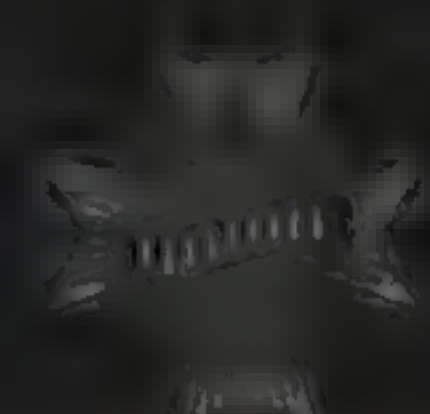
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# The Dream is still alive

Prog-rockers are still firing on all creative cylinders



BY MICHAEL WEISBERG >> Dream Theater is touring its 10th album more than 20 years into its career // Supplied

BY LYN NIKODYM

Dream Theater's James LaBrie grew up loving Rush. While that may not be a stretch for an Ontario teen of the '70s, these days he can also boast some common ground with Geddy Lee. Not only do both gentlemen lend distinctive voices to their respective prog-rock bands, but both have also sung the national anthem at major league games—and gotten stage fright doing it.

"I was reading one time that Geddy Lee, he was saying out of all the years that they played all over the world, and playing in front of 20,000 people a night, he was never so nervous as when he sang for the Toronto Blue Jays game, a baseball game, and he had to walk out there and sing the national anthem," LaBrie says. "And I thought, 'Wow, that's so true,' because I remember walking out on [Maple Leaf] ice and going, 'Wow, this is really bizarre. This is totally different.' You're out there, it's naked, it's you and your voice and it's you singing to a crowd of whatever—18,000 people—by yourself. But it was still cool. I had a great time doing it."

"It was [stage fright]," he laughs. "I could understand where Geddy Lee was coming from. It was almost like your first gig, to go out there and go, 'Holy shit, why am I getting nervous?' And I've done this many times before."

Many times before is a little understatement. Dream Theater has a 20-plus-year career under their belt, a career that includes more than a few platinum albums. It's also a career that is still gaining momentum. The band's last album—the June release *Black Clouds & Silver Linings*—debuted the week of its release at number one on the *Billboard* 200 and number one *Billboard* 200's top 100 charts.

"I'm not at all like the other artists," LaBrie says. "I don't know. It's really a phenomenon. It's a strange and unexplainable when stuff

like this is happening 20 years into your career, but we're kind of really modest about it because we say, 'Well, we've been really working our butts off all these years and thank God that something is starting to click for us.'"

While LaBrie tips his hat to the band's new home—Dream Theater joined Roadrunner for its '07 release, *Systematic Chaos*—as one of the ingredients to the band's growing popularity, credit is also due to Dream Theater's consistency. To be clear, however, there is a difference between dependably delivering solid albums and roaring performances and slipping into a routine.

"We want to, so to speak loosely, re-invent ourselves, never repeat what we have done. So we're always first and foremost challenging ourselves, and integrity is always priority for us. The beauty of being in a band like this is that fans know that we are unpredictable, and because of that, that gives us the freedom to be able to come up with something and not be scared to experiment, not to be scared to go into waters untreaded," LaBrie says. "We absolutely love doing what we do. We're very passionate about our music, we're passionate about going out on stage every night and performing for our fans, and I think that's what keeps us doing what we're doing."

"I think that once we feel that we're just going through the motions and want the payday, then I think that at that point you can be a scumbag and keep on doing it, or you can be truthful with yourself and your fans that are paying the hard money, and say, 'That's it, we've had an amazing run. Let's move on,'" he adds. "But I think that is the furthest thing from the truth." ▽

VIEW, PAGE 11 (6 PM)

DREAM THEATER

WITH ZAPATA FLYS ZAPPED

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<p>SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 26</p> <p>PAWN SHOP</p> <p>TWO</p>	<p>FRIDAY NOVEMBER 13</p> <p>STARLITE</p> <p>DINOSAUR JR.</p> <p>PLUS GUESTS</p> <p>PINK MOUNTAINTOPS</p>
<p>SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 27</p> <p>MCDUGALL UNITED</p> <p>FINAL FANTASY</p> <p>SEPT. 27 &amp; 28 MCDUGALL UNITED CHURCH</p>	<p>THURSDAY NOVEMBER 19</p> <p>PAWN SHOP</p> <p>OH BLISS</p>
<p>FRIDAY OCTOBER 2</p> <p>PAWN SHOP</p> <p>JSB</p> <p>JEREMY SWIFT BAND</p>	<p>SUNDAY NOVEMBER 22</p> <p>MACDOUGALL UNITED</p> <p>THE VIC CHESNUTT BAND</p> <p>FEATURING GUY PICCIOTTO AND MEMBERS OF THE SILVER MOUNTAIN &amp; GODSPEED YOUR BLACK EMERALD</p>
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## COMMENT >>> FILE SHARING

# Arr, there be pirates here

## Sweden puts justice in the hands of the corporations

The Canadian Recording Industry Association is trumpeting a music-industry turnaround that's going on in Sweden, a country which was home to arguably the planet's most notorious file-sharing site since Napster, Pirate Bay.

According to Sweden Wire, Internet usage has dropped almost in half since a new get-tough law was introduced to hunt down file-sharers. The music industry claims that this is a sign of just how much bandwidth was being used up by people illegally swapping music and movies.

And, since the law was introduced, music sales are up 14 percent, while legal downloading has spiked by more than 50 percent.

(Now, legal downloading also takes up

significant bandwidth, so that 50 percent rise must come from a pretty small base number if it doesn't make a real dent in the huge downward trend in Internet use. Just being the Devil's advocate. That's what I get paid to do.)

This is what makes the Swedish law so tough: according to the government's own English text, "Sweden has to introduce provisions that give rightholders a right to information on the origin and distribution networks of the goods or services which infringe an intellectual property right."

That means record companies, movie distributors or even the bands or authors themselves have the right to track illegal file-sharers back to the

source. And sue.

And this is what makes me feel uneasy. Anyone who reads this column on a regular basis knows how I feel about the abuse of copyright. But I also understand that people have a right to privacy, and those accused of wrongdoing have a right to due process. To me, copyright infringement is an issue for lawmakers and the justice system. We can't allow corporations to become policemen.

As well, I have always been one who believes the carrot is better than the stick. The recording industry is still struggling to find ways to entice the public, especially those under 30, to stay out of the online grey market. I think that Radiohead and Nine Inch Nails have shown us that if you are honest with your fan base and offer your

art online, people will pay for it even if they don't have to. Unfortunately, the traditional music industry has been too slow to move to change, and is begging for tough laws, instead.

I still don't see a value-added business model that promotes the development of artists, the nurturing of fan bases and creates new and interesting avenues for bands to connect with their followers and, gasp, make money, too.

In the long run, this will create resentment. Rebels will create new programs that can block those who try to trace file-sharers. Maybe the Swedish government has spurred a game of online cat and mouse.

Steven Sandor is a former editor-in-chief of *Vue Weekly*, now an editor and author living in Toronto.



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# Lions for summer

St. Albert band to make the most of the dwindling days



ON THE ROAD AGAIN >> St. Albert's Lions for Sheep is making the most of the summer while it lasts. // Brock Kryton

PHOTO BY BRYAN BIRTLES  
/ BRYAN@VUEWEEKLY.COM

With only a couple weeks of summer left to go, it seems like high time to get out of town for a bit and enjoy what dwindling warmth this northern country provides. So went

the thinking for St. Albert band Lions for Sheep when the group planned itself a small tour through BC and Alberta, kicking off next Thursday at the Starlite Room.

After last summer's attempt at a similar trip—which, as singer and guitarist Erik Grice explains, could have been

considered a disaster or a success depending on how you look at it—Lions for Sheep is hoping that the musical part of the trip goes better, and that the fun part of the trip stays the same.

"We tried [to go on tour] last summer with some bands from Camrose and we just ended up playing St. Albert, Camrose, and then we drove to Calgary and all our shows fell through so we just ended up camping—we probably ended up spending more money on beer than we did on gas," he laughs before recounting the preparations the band is making for this trip. "We usually make a bunch of tour CDs and because it's the summer we figured we'd save a lot of money by camping instead of staying at hotels and peoples houses—we don't

really know too many people in BC—so we're camping. We've got bocce ball and croquet so we'll be having lots of fun."

The band will be hawking copies of its new CD, entitled *The Contest*, while on tour. Lions for Sheep accomplished the recording of the album primarily through being awarded studio time in Battle of the Bands competitions, making the title the members chose for the album cheeky but apt.

"When we wanted to name it we were all laughing and saying we should name it after our favourite *Seinfeld* episode and we thought it'd be funny and then we realized halfway through making it that it kind of made sense because half the CD we had won the time for via contest, so it kind of came up that way," says Grice.

After this summer's tour, the band's members will all be headed back to school, but have plans to keep working on the group whenever they have the chance.

"When we come back from tour at the end of August, we're all in school but we're going to spend our off time recording a full-length," explains Grice. "We're just going through our songs and new songs and coming up with a list of about 12 songs that we're gonna put on an album."

THU, AUG 20 (9 PM)

LIONS FOR SHEEP

WITH MICHAEL RAULT, THE GRIMBEAT  
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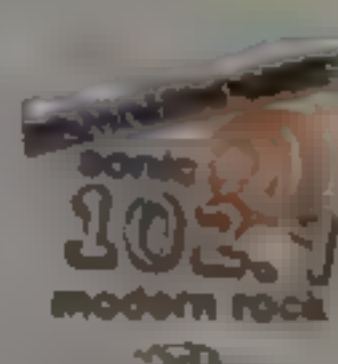
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# The power of multiples

BC metal band harnesses dual vocals and guitars

JAMIE STEWART

With *Unleash the Archers* vocalist Brittney Hayes cleaning out the band van well in advance of the band's upcoming month-long cross-Canada tour. It would seem the group is trying not to leave everything to the last minute, a lesson learned after the whirlwind summertime recording/mixing/pressing stages of its debut album *Behold the Devastation* ended with the band receiving the final product the day before the CD release show on August 1.

"We recorded at Omegamedia Core Studios throughout June in Richmond, BC with producer Jason Martin," explains Hayes. "But with us being on [Vancouver] island and the studio being on the mainland, we basically ended up doing

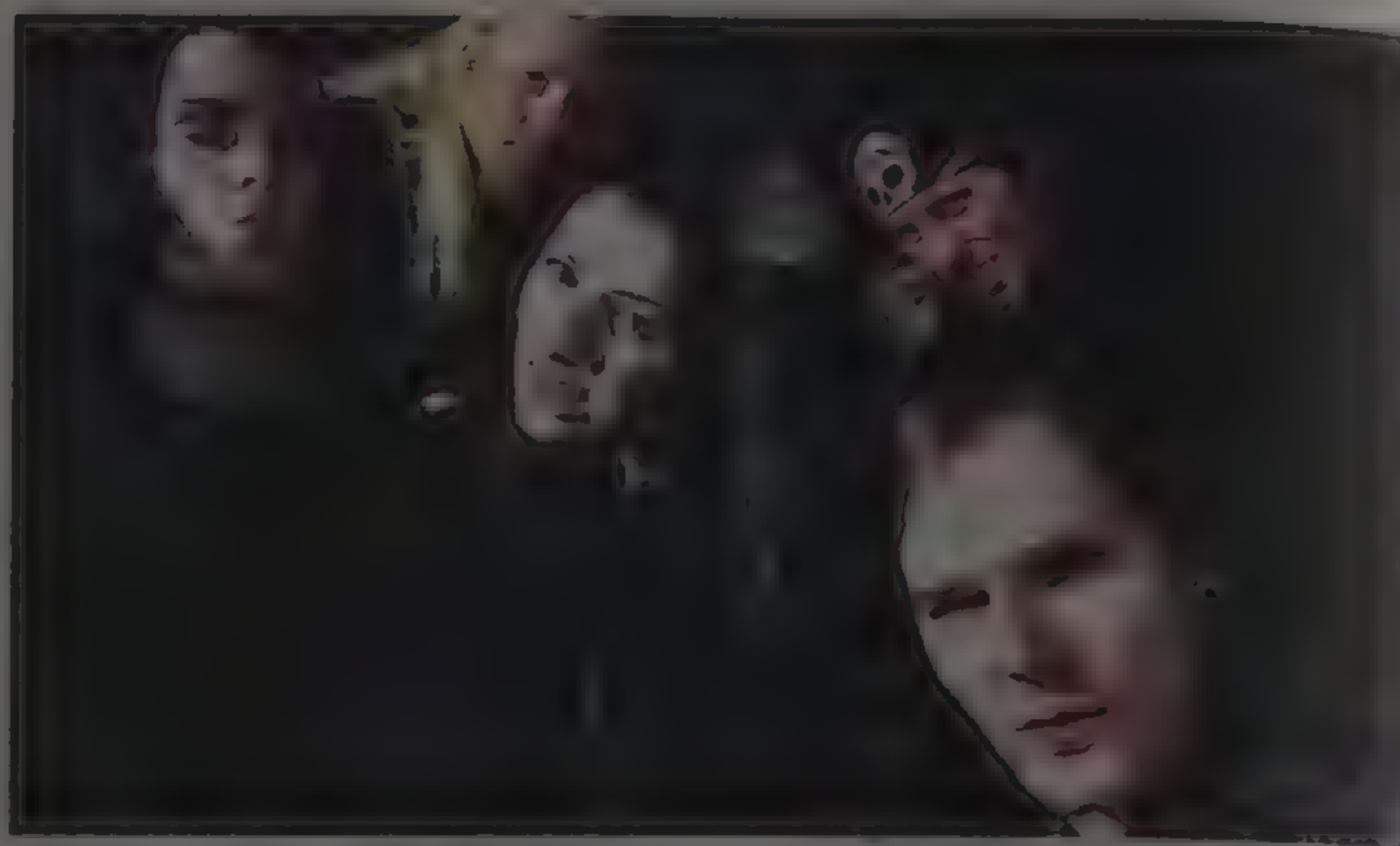
the album in two-day intervals. We'd take turns going over one at a time to record our parts during these 12-hour sessions. It could be tricky, because you'd show up and all of a sudden there would be these different parts or sections of songs, and you'd have to completely change whatever you'd have written. Fortunately, Brayden [Dyczkowski, guitar/vocals] was able to go over every time to make sure things were going according to plan."

With Hayes' background in choral singing—she's been singing in choirs since the age of eight—the band found itself an experienced vocalist who had already toured internationally with the University of Victoria Chamber Choir, including stops in China, Mexico, the US and all throughout Eastern Europe.

"A lot of what I learned from my time

with the choir prepared me for life in this band," Hayes acknowledges. "Mostly just in terms of getting prepared for shows. I won't drink on tour if I have a show the next day—there's just no way I can do this properly if I'm totally hung-over. I know what the limits of my voice are and I'm not willing to jeopardize it for any reason. The guys are always trying to get me to scream and growl, but there's no way I would unless I can find someone to teach me how to do it without tearing my throat up."

But it's the dual vocals that are perhaps the most striking thing about the band, with Hayes' voice evoking the soaring melodies and vocal calisthenics of metal's golden years, while Dyczkowski's grunts and shrieks bring a harsher, almost black metal feel to the band's dual guitars and chugging riffs.



**NOT JUST ONE OF THE GUYS** >> Singer Brittney Hayes set to head out on the road with four stinky guys // Sara Peeling

"My main influence in metal is Bruce Dickinson, for sure. I love Iron Maiden. But I also love Rob Halford from Judas Priest—I really like his simplistic approach to how he approaches the vocals," Hayes explains. "Sometimes Brayden will write some music that is so complex, and my instinct will be to match that intensity with my vocals, but then I listen to Halford and realize you can do so much more if you just pull back. Danzig is great because he's in my vocal range, and I can get more into the darker side of things when I listen to him. And of course if I ever want to get epic, I reach for the Dio."

In a genre much maligned for its treatment of women—just think of the blatant misogynistic tendencies of '80s glam metal—Hayes is relieved to find the metal scenes of today to be much more accepting

and encouraging of a strong female presence, moreso than the vast majority of pop music, where women routinely struggle against dismissal and condescension.

"That's one of the reasons that I love metal," explains Hayes. "It's one of the scenes where you can just kind of show up and be female and sing or scream and be welcomed, and not have a huge deal being made about it. There's much more objectification in pop music that women are constantly fighting against that just doesn't really exist as much in metal. It's nice to just be accepted, to feel like a peer touring around in a van with a bunch of stinky guys."

SAT, AUG 15 (8 PM)

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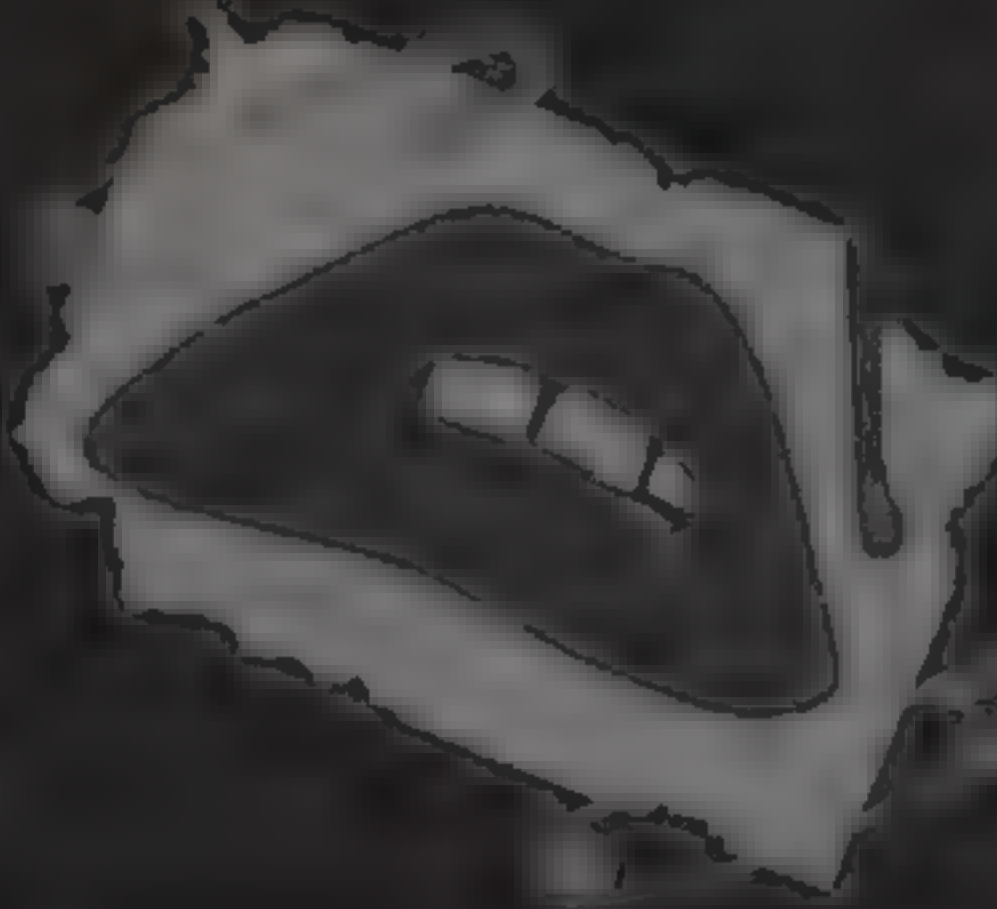
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# A good weekend's Unrest

A two-night festival for the other folks

BRYAN BIRTLES  
bry@vancouverweekly.com

The best part of a festival is the opportunity it gives you to see something you wouldn't be able to otherwise. In the same way the Folk Fest and the Fringe bring in acts from all over the world, Unrest Records' **Unrest Fest** is a shopping in bands that Edmonton punks wouldn't normally have the chance to see, unless of course they, like festival organizer Mike Safage, were the sort of person that was willing to fly all the way to catch new and exciting stuff. I'm excited to see some of these bands from Europe like Driller Killer and Malignant Tumour. They're good friends of ours and they've never been to Canada before so it'll be nice to bring them to

our country and let them see what Canada's all about," he says, explaining that he saw both bands while in the Czech Republic doing merch for Portland's Defiance. "Defiance was playing some shows in and around France and the second that was over we jumped a bird and flew out to Prague and saw Driller Killer the one night from Sweden and the next night we saw Malignant Tumour so it was really cool to see those two shows while I was travelling." Mentioning the Dickies as another band he's excited to have fly in to rock the show, Safage is also proud to have some of the city's best punk acts opening for the heavyweights he's bringing in. "A lot of the local bands worship the bands that are headlining and I see it as a favour to these bands that pay hom-

age to some of these bigger bands on the bill," he says, joking that he doesn't always do it out of the goodness of his heart. "It just boils down to the fact that we're friends with all the local bands and we're constantly being nagged to put them on the bill." **V**

**UNREST FEST 2009**  
FRI, AUG 14 (6 PM)  
DRILLER KILLER, DAYGLO ABORTIONS, MALIGNANT TUMOUR, DFA, TARANTUJA, PROFITS OF CRIME  
NEW CITY, \$25

SAT, AUG 15 (6 PM)  
THE DICKIES, SNFU, MALIGNANT TUMOUR, POSER DISPOSER, THE DIRTBAGS, LET'S DANCE  
NEW CITY, \$25

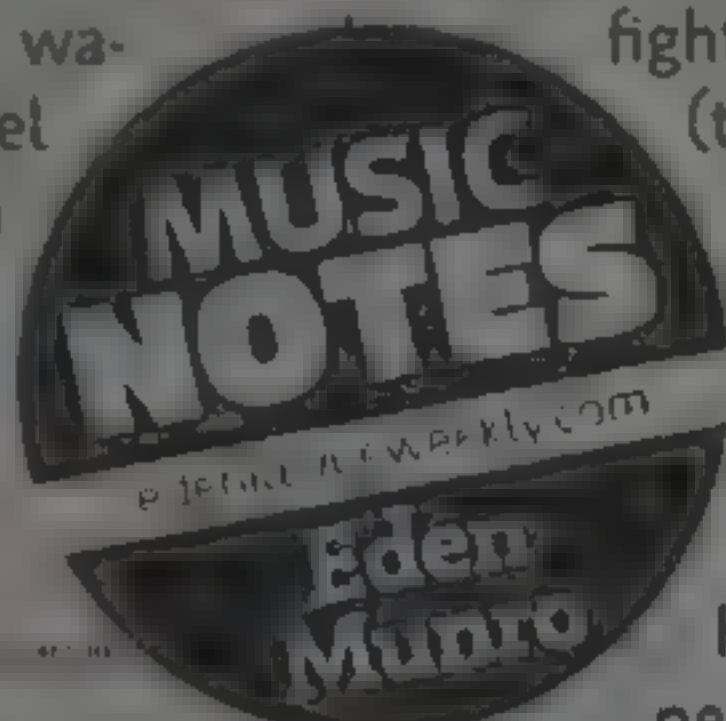


**BUST A MOVE >>** Let's Dance is one of the local acts sharing the bill with a wide range of international punks for Unrest Fest 2009 // Edén Munro

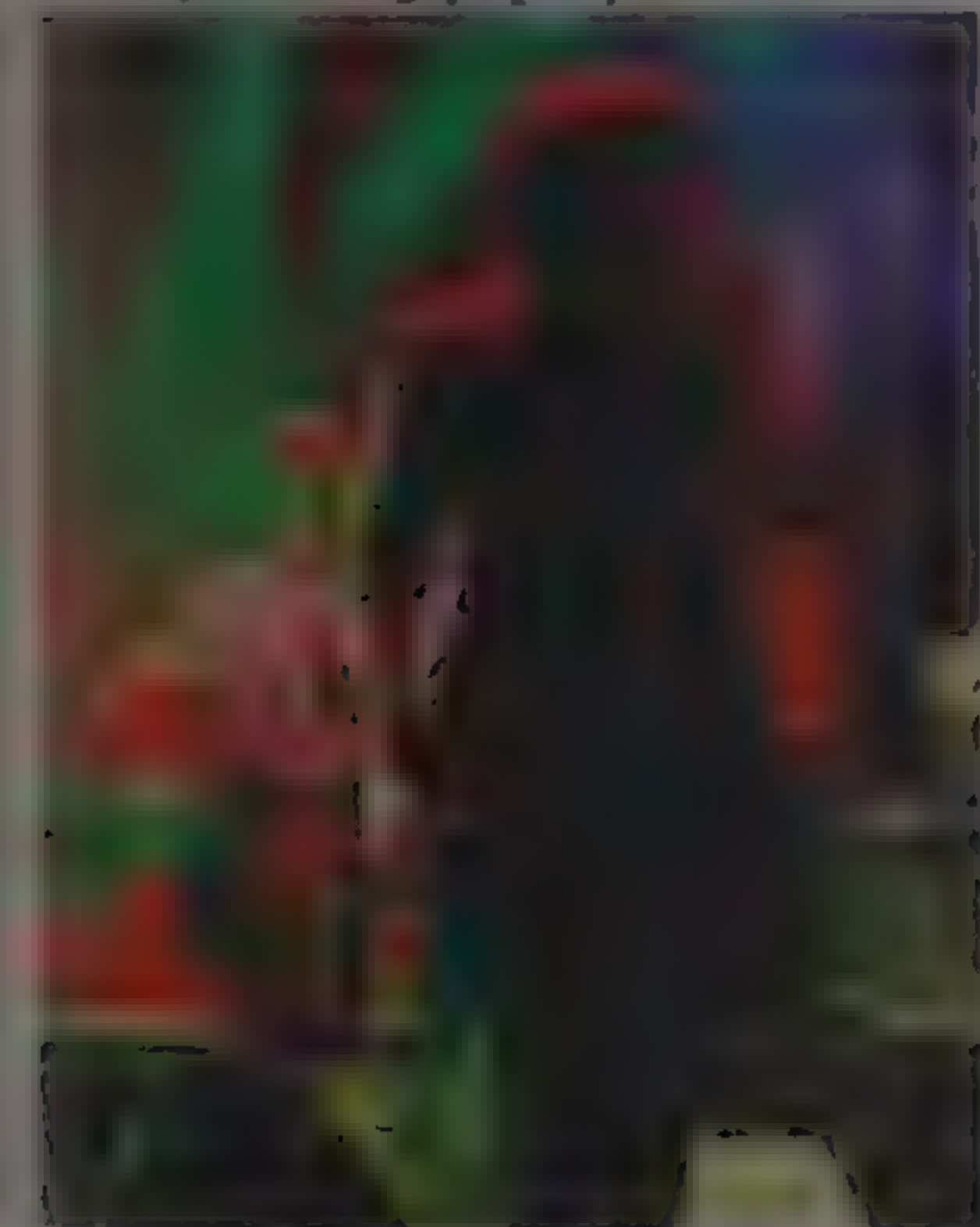
## THIS WEEK

**FRI, AUG 13 - SUN, AUG 16**  
**JAZZ AT THE LAKE**  
WITH OLIVER JONES, CHERYL FISHER AND MORE  
SYLVAN LAKE

Jazz at the Lake. If you like jazz, what better way could there be to enjoy some music at the tail end of the summer than out at Sylvan Lake? It's peaceful, and you could even stay over in a nice waterfront hotel if you don't feel like driving back to Edmonton at night. Check [jazzatthelake.com](http://jazzatthelake.com) for the complete info



**THU, AUG 13 (8 pm)**



**COCKATOO**  
ROBYN BRIGHT, GREG PRETTY, ROD WOLFE  
NEW CITY

Robyn Bright is something of an enigma, with her otherworldly voice and shimmering guitar giving Cockatoo much of its identity. (That's not to discount the contributions of founding bassist Rod Wolfe and the trio of players who have held down the drums, Greg Pretty being the current timekeeper—it's just that Bright cuts right to the fore of the music in dramatically stunning way.) Check out Cockatoo's music at [myspace.com/cockatoomusic](http://myspace.com/cockatoomusic) and then go see the band live. Or go to the live show first and buy a copy of *The Basement Tapes* EP while you're there. It's a beautiful, atmospheric piece of work.

**FRI, AUG 14 (7 pm)**  
**THE RED JUMPSUIT APPARATUS**  
WITH MONTYAREI, THE DARES, GO RADIO  
STARLITE ROOM, \$23.50

Sometimes the press release says it best: "The band founded The Red Jumpsuit Apparatus Guardian Angel Foundation as an umbrella group to support a wide range of initiatives, including the fight against domestic violence (the subject of their hit single, "Face Down"), hyperglycemia research and their latest project, supporting high school band programs in need of funds. ... The group has plans to make impromptu performances at high schools along with their orchestra, contributing all proceeds to their programs." These guys are about more than just being rock stars, which is kind of nice considering how many musicians just want to rock 'n' roll all night and party every day with no regard for the world around them.

**SAT, AUG 15 (8 pm)**



**ULTIMATE POWER DUO**  
WITH GUESTS  
DVB TAVERN, \$5

Ultimate Power Duo's secret to ultimate power? The band is lying—it's a trio. And UPD's off-the-wall indie punk's pretty tough, too. That's a one-two-three punch that's hard to beat. **V**

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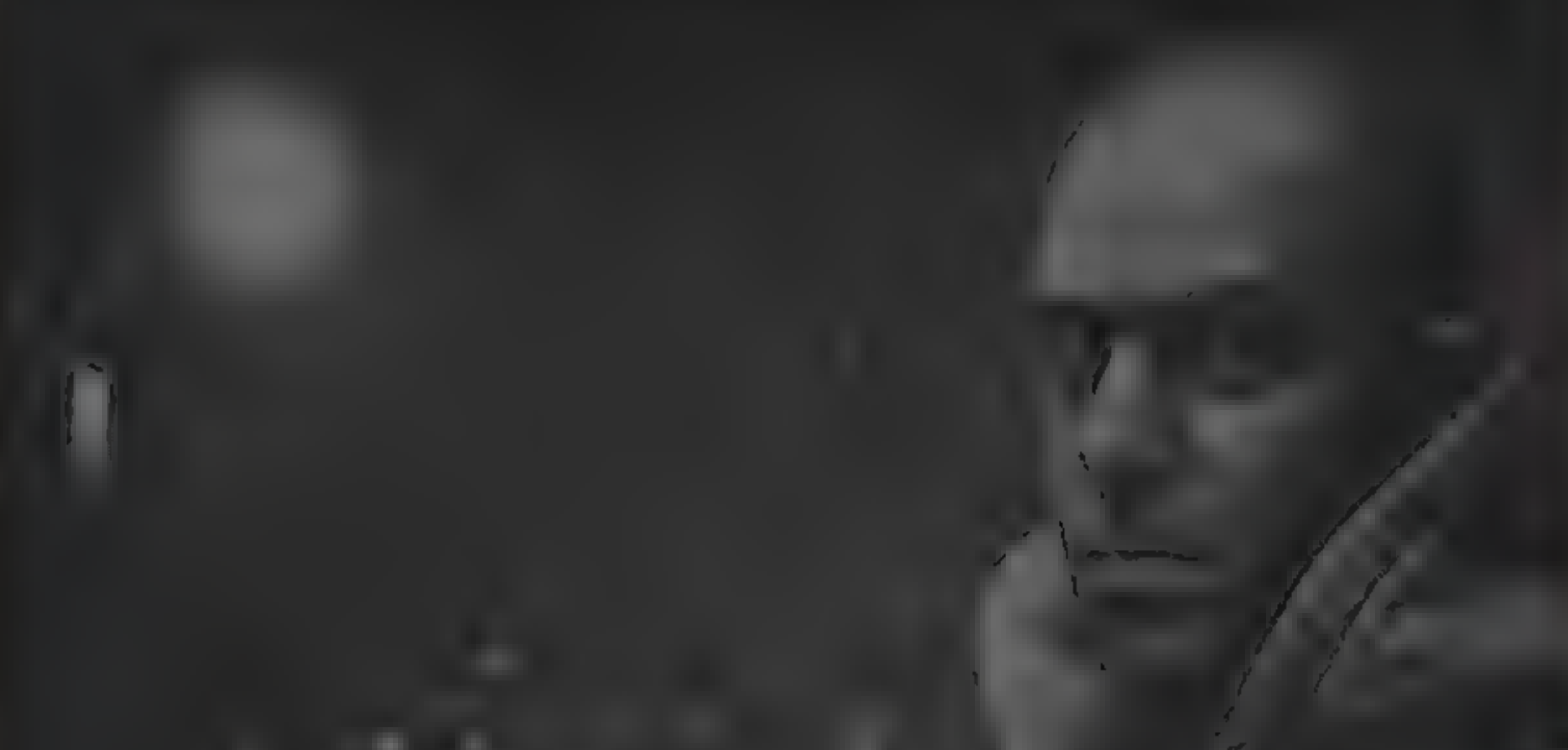
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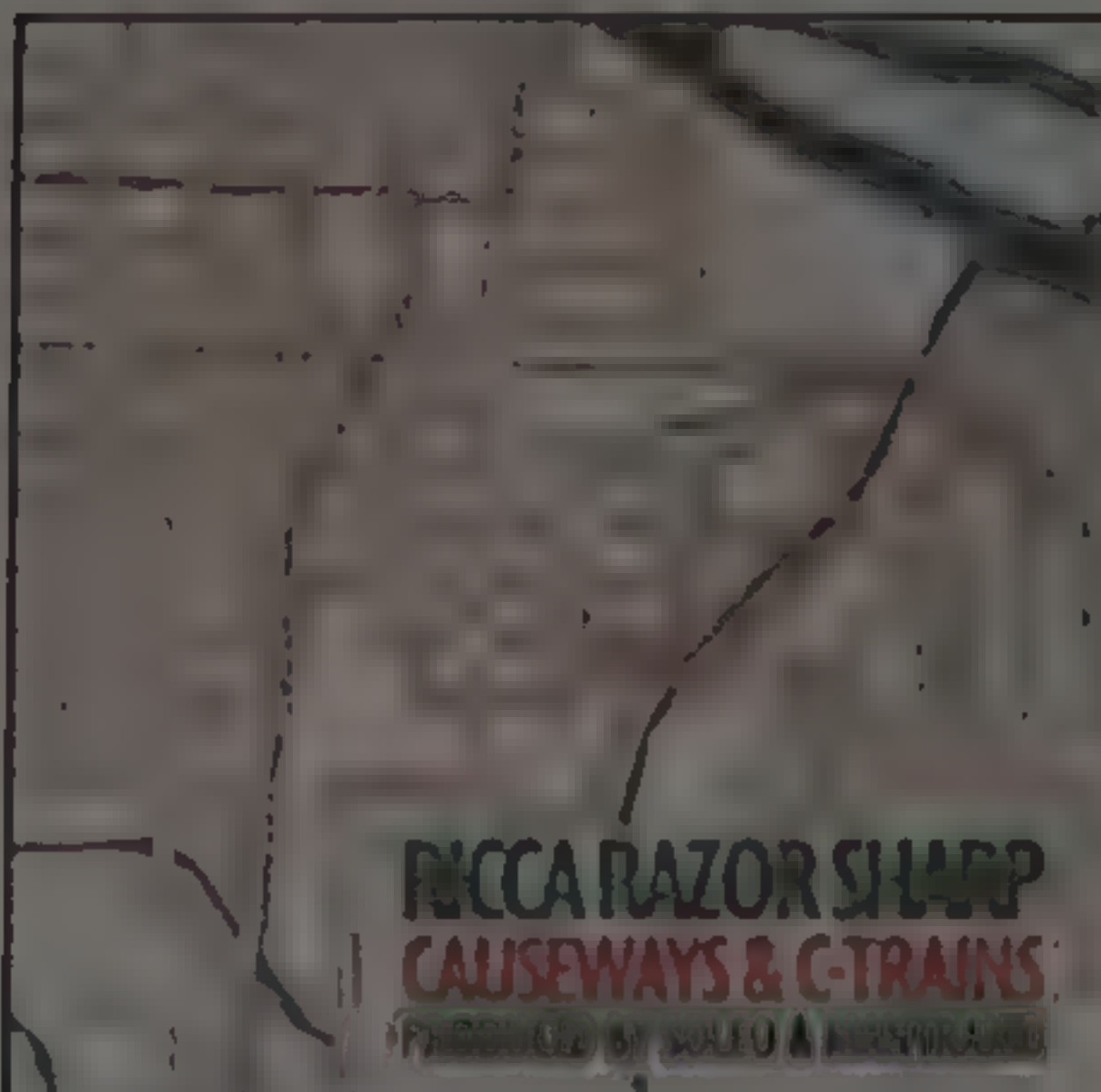
DOORS AT 8 PM - 19 + NO MINORS  
TIX ALSO AT FOOSH & BLACKBYRD



ALBUM REVIEWS

# New Sounds

**Ricca Razor Sharp**  
**Causeways & C-Trains**  
(Neferiu)  
★★★★



MARY CHRISTA O'KEEFE

WWW.MARYCHRISTAO'KEEFE.COM

Artless literalism should be no more welcome in hip hop than in singer-songwriter folk, and *Causeways & C-Trains* begins ingloriously, with the life benchmarks of Calgarian Ricca Razor Sharp muscling around its first track like a '70s hustler on the boardwalks of Venice Beach, oiled up and obvious. That the genre is based on braggadocio is true, but points were traditionally awarded to breathtaking twisty-tongued rhythmic mastery and a knowing play with language and ideas, innovation and reference. At the advent of the Janus-faced art, it would have been hard to predict a shift to blunt aural thuggery by some practitioners, and that it would remain a pervasive thread in the larger hip-hop community. Ricca Razor Sharp and companions apparently favour this more aggressive

approach, as *Causeways & C-Trains* is a calamitous urban pastiche that mostly consists of driving beats, grinding hard rock slashes of guitar, shouty vocals pushed so far forward in the mix they're an inch from your face, assorted sonic tchotchkes borrowed from Insane Clown Posse's toolbox, and a frenzy of digital scratching.

His lyrics partially explain the reliance on such strutting, since Ricca displays neither a gift for poetry, nor any particular insight into his culture. His focus is narcissistic rather than evocative, tracks populated by glib witticisms on Calgary stereotypes, facile anthems about togetherness and revolution, exhortations to party, and posturing boasts about how "real" he is as a rapper.

Hip hop is over 30 years old, by some accounts, and collects listeners and artists from across the world, across genders and ethnicities and across economic circumstance. I care far less as a listener about where an artist comes from than what he or she has to say about it, and how deftly it is said: otherwise that conversation is tiresome, especially when it accounts for a third of your content.

I suspect I'm being unfair to RRS and crew, misunderstanding the idiom they feel they're working in. Perhaps they're basically a loud party band, and their shoe-horning of words like "existentialism" into their work isn't an invitation to meaning, but is more like a cool T-shirt logo.

But there is skill and energy lurking behind Ricca's sonic erection—nifty textures relegated to the background, riffs that are catchy, promising guests and boundless enthusiasm—and one would hope for a more earnest engagement with craft next time out, less Ferderline-esque self-delight and a more substantive perspective. **V**

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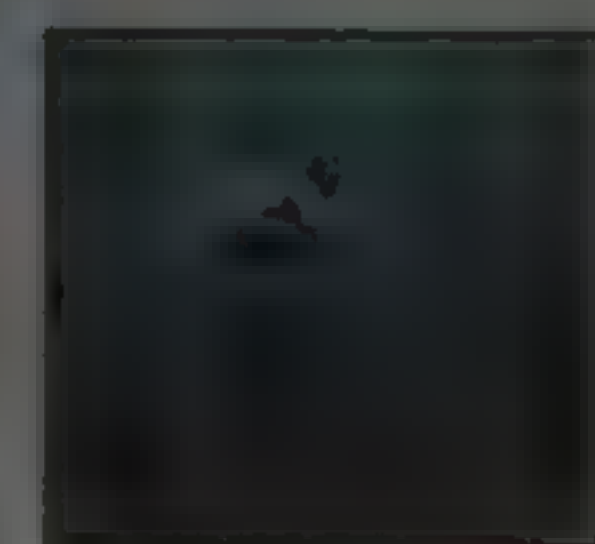
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05. homage to the sine wave eleh	10. legends of benin v/a

**Jonsi and Alex**  
**Riceboy Sleeps**  
(XL)  
★★★★

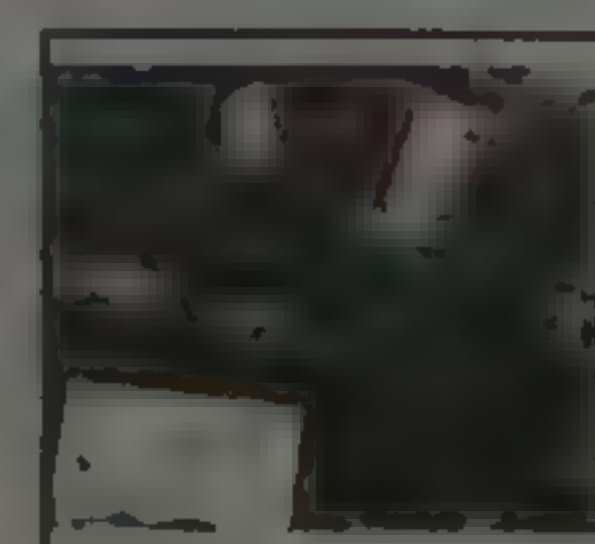


Gay boys Jonsi (Sigur Ros frontman) and Alex turn a hardcover book project into a sprawling debut of ambient strings and ghostly choral backup, which sounds less indulgent the more you listen, progressing towards a soothing experimental wind-down. It's made with the best intentions, neither smug or cocky. Despite how many albums by other artists might have done it better.

JONATHAN BUSCH

WWW.JONATHANBUSCH.COM

**Andrew Vincent**  
**Rotten Pear**  
(Kelp)  
★★★★



Being a sad bastard is an affliction that comes to everyone once in a while, but a significant number of songwriters seem to wallow in

it on an almost permanent basis, giving them the ability to explain it to everyone else. Like some sort of professor of depression, Andrew Vincent's *Rotten Pear* covers what seems like an unending string of disappointments like losing the girl, not making the band and—perhaps most universal and crushing—realizing you don't live up to the person you always considered yourself to be. Even a song like "Canadian Dream," which contains a list of the small victories inherent to being a Canadian—like buying a house in a cheap part of town and a television to watch hockey on—sounds melancholy and perhaps a little defeatist, but also seems genuine in its near-contentedness. Vincent is always hoping for a little bit more and never getting it and it's that longing—so expertly expressed—that permeates the album and makes it so successful.

BRYAN BATTLE

WWW.BRYANBATTLE.COM

**Sydney York**  
**Sydney York**  
(Independent)  
★★★★



Sydney York, Calgary's answer to Beyonce's *Sasha Fierce*, is the alter ego of Brandi Sidoruk, a trained opera singer and music

educator turned studio folkie. Her album feels like a personal departure from her previous classical background, and is lesser for those of us listening—the songs are tightly wound to become something folk listeners are already too familiar with. A great talent is definitely on display, but the arrangement lacks the vulnerability that the genre often requires to turn out something truer to its roots. I want to hear the sister let loose.

JONATHAN BUSCH

WWW.JONATHANBUSCH.COM







# HOROSCOPE

## ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 19)

I started producing some good work with in 10 years of launching my writing career, but I didn't hit my stride until the 18th year. From what I hear, many other skills require a long training period as well. According to an Aikido adept I know, for example, a practitioner may require 30 years to master the moves and spirit of that martial art. And as for the ability to carry on a successful intimate relationship, it usually takes a lifetime. I hope this line of thinking helps you get a more practical perspective on the pace you're trying to develop, Aries. Keep in mind that it probably wouldn't be worth learning if you could become a wizard in a flash. There's no rush. Give yourself credit for how far you've come already.

## TAURUS (Apr 20 - May 20)

Talk to yourself more and better. Not just with streams of chatter that meander aimlessly. Not with darts of self-deprecation mixed in with grandiose fantasies. No, Taurus. When I urge you to talk to yourself more and better, I mean that you should address your self with focused tenderness. I mean that you should be driven by the bold intention to lift up your mind, praise your skills, shower blessings on your vulnerabilities and love yourself down to the core. You will attract cosmic assistance if you do this playful work. You will bathe your subconscious intelligence with healing luminosity.

## GEMINI (May 21 - Jun 20)

I climbed the endless steps to the sanctuary, brushing off large spiders that kept

landing on me. I stood in the rain for hours waiting for the gates to open. The guardian of the threshold wouldn't let me in until I answered his tricky and sometimes insulting questions. Through it all, I maintained my patience and poise and reverence. At no time did I give in to the temptation to curse the difficulties. And when I finally entered, when I got my chance to penetrate to the heart of the rose-petal-strewn labyrinth, my persistence was rewarded. As I knelt there in amused awe, face to face with the sacred jokester, I got a useful answer to the most important question in my life. Would you like a comparable experience, Gemini? It's possible in the coming week.

## CANCER (Jun 21 - Jul 22)

Visionary philosopher Buckminster Fuller said that "Pollution is nothing but resources we're not harvesting." If that's true, Cancerian, you've got a lot of resources available to you right now, although they will have to be converted from their smoggy and effluvial state. So for example, if you're a songwriter, the noxious emotions floating around could be raw material for a sparkling tune. If you're a lover, the peculiar vibes you're dealing with could inspire you to prevent a dumb pattern from repeating itself.

## LEO (Jul 23 - Aug 22)

The monsoon rains have not blessed eastern India with their usual downpours this year. In response, frustrated farmers have resorted to a radical ritual: asking their unmarried daughters to get naked and plow the fields. They believe that this will embarrass the weather gods into acting correctly.

In general, I approve of being creative in making appeals to deities, but I recommend that you use a different approach. Rather than shaming them into providing you with more love and mojo, try flattering them. As if you were celebrating Halloween early, go around impersonating a god or goddess who is overflowing with love and mojo.

## VIRGO (Aug 23 - Sep 22)

Two annoyances that had been bugging you before your exile have been neutralized. But you've still got at least one more to go, so don't relax yet. In fact, I think you should redouble your vigilance. Check expiration dates on your poetic licenses and pet theories. Scrub the muck from your aura, even if your friends seem to find it "interesting." And learn to read your own mind better so you can track down any disabling thoughts that might still be lurking in remote corners.

## LIBRA (Sep 23 - Oct 22)

Your upcoming adventures will probably make no sense—unless you redefine what constitutes "sense." If you do that, your adventures could make absolutely lucid sense in a backward, upside-down way that will rejuvenate you sexually, spiritually, and emotionally. Here's another approach to understanding the point I'm trying to make: the epic drama you're about to begin may yield no apparent lesson and provide no practical guidance—unless you empty your mind and give up hope for extracting specific lessons and guidance—in which case you will be flooded with wise insights.

## SCORPIO (Oct 23 - Nov 21)

What tricks have you employed to out-

wit your fears in the past? Remember them. Review them. Next, think about the people who have inspired you to be more courageous than you imagined were capable of. If you take these two actions, you will prepare yourself well for the week ahead. I'm not saying that the things you're scared of will be any bigger or badder than usual. But I want you to know that you now have the potential to gain a robust new power over them.

## SAGITTARIUS (Nov 22 - Dec 21)

You are currently getting more kilometres per litre and more bang for the buck than you have in a long time. Your IQ is creeping higher. Your knack for scoring good parking places is at a peak. I'll even go so far as to say that it's been quite a while since you've been teased by such thoroughly useful temptations. And get this, Sagittarius: I suspect that you have an enhanced instinct for taking smart risks. The only downside of all this good news is that you may not know your own strength. That means you should test it fast; find out more about its potential. Otherwise, you might break someone's heart by accident, or prematurely shatter the illusions of a person who's not yet ready to stop living in fantasyland.

## CAPRICORN (Dec 22 - Jan 19)

I wouldn't be surprised if your whole life passed instantly before your eyes one day soon. Not because you'll come close to literal physical death or anything dangerous at all, but rather because you will have a brush with a magic power that could be yours in the future—a magic power that will be possible for you to fully own only if you cut the umbilicus that links you to a dying source. Wow. Did I really say that

in a fun little astrology column? And are you really prepared to change your life because of something you read in a fun little astrology column? I hope so. In the coming weeks, it'll be the fun little things that have the greatest potential to align you more closely with your soul's code.

## AQUARIUS (Jan 20 - Feb 18)

In the days ahead, you may not realize what you're looking for until you find it. I advise you, therefore, to put into action the following five-point plan. 1) Suppress any knowledge of all tendencies you might have. 2) Reveal your childhood talent for being voraciously curious about everything. 3) Ask more questions than you've ever asked before. 4) Figure out how to be receptive without being passive, and how you can be humble without muffling your self-confidence. 5) Consider the possibility that you have a lot to learn about what's best for you.

## PISCES (Feb 19 - Mar 20)

I've borrowed a fable from the ancient Greek writer Aesop to create a parable you can use in the coming weeks. Once upon a time there was a very thirsty crow. Rain hadn't fallen in a long time, and the creek from which she'd always drunk had dried up. Searching and searching for a bit of moisture, the crow finally happened upon a tree under which sat a ceramic pitcher with some water in it. But the pitcher's neck was narrow, and the crow couldn't fit her beak past it to reach the water. Inspired by desperation, the crow at last got an idea. Why not drop small rocks into the pitcher, making the water's level rise? And that's exactly what she did. How sweet it was when at last she quenched her thirst.

# UNREST FEST 2009

## Edmonton, Alberta - Canada

FR. AUG. 14 - SAT. AUG. 15

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(EX-ANTI CINEM SWEDEN)

**GOLERS**

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# August 14 / 15

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DEADLINE: FRIDAY AT 3PM

## CLUBS + LECTURES

**AIKIKAI AIKIDO CLUB** 10139-87 Ave, Old Strathcona Community League • Japanese Martial Art of Aikido • Every Tue 7:30-9:30pm; Thu 6-8pm

**AWAKENING VENUS** 9923-82 Ave, 780.990.1099 • AwakeningVenus.ca • Women's holistic reproductive and sexual health info session • Aug 20, 6-15pm

**AWA 12-STEP SUPPORT GROUP** 10139-87 Ave, Old Strathcona Community League • N. door, 6 Bernard St. Bishop St. Sir Winston Churchill Ave, St. Albert • For adult children of alcoholic and dysfunctional families • Meet Mondays including holidays, 7:30pm

**BICYCLE MAINTENANCE** BikeWorks, 10047-30 Ave (back alley) • edmontonbikes.ca • Fixing flats, adjusting brakes and adjusting shifting • Every Tue and Fri evening Aug 14-28 • \$10 register in adv in person at BikeWorks

**BIG BIN EVENT** www.edmonton.ca/leuse • To donate or household items in good condition, too large for regular garbage collection at no cost. Household hazardous waste items not accepted • Callingham Community, 17740-69 Ave; Aug 15-16 • Callingham Community, 112 Ave, 30 St; Aug 22-23

**BUDDHIST PRACTICE** 10502-70 Ave, www.karmatashiling.ca • Meditation and Buddhist practice: Wed, 7pm • DVD's and discussion: Fri, 7pm • Free, beginners welcome

**CANADIAN MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION** Suite 800, 10045-111 St, 780.414.6311 • Family support drop-in group for individuals who are supporting an adult family member who is living with a mental illness • Every Wed, 6:30-8:30pm

**CHESS CLUB** 780.474.2318 • Learn to play chess; opportunities for all ages including classes, school programs and tournaments • rovingchessnuts@shaw.ca

**CLASSIC CAR WEEKEND** Henry Singer Ball Diamonds, South Ave between Shep St and Telus Tower Rd, Spruce Grove, 780.962.3100 • A vintage car parade, show and shine, tailgate swap meet, poker run, a burnout, and more • Aug 13-16

**COUNTRY CUISINE-TOMATO FARE** Country Road Greenhouses, 52043 Range Rd 231, Silverwood Park, 1.866.811.6740 • edmontonscountryside.com • Organic meats, cheese, fruits and vegetables grown locally, 50% of the menu items will incorporate tomatoes; including live entertainment, beer gardens, and a fireworks display • Aug 16 • 315 (adv) \$10 (door)

**COUNTRY SOUL STROLL** www.edmontonscountryside.com • Self-guided driving tour of Sturgeon County and the northern region of Edmonton's countryside • Until Sept 7

**CREATURES IN CRISIS-A TIME TO ACT** Valley Zoo, 134 St, Buena Vista Rd, 780.442.5311 • valleyzoo.ca • Sun, Aug 23

**EDMONTON ESPERANTO SOCIETY** 1812, 10025-102A Ave, 780.702.5117 • Fri, noon-1pm • vaughn@newardconsulting.com

**EDMONTON GHOST TOURS** Meet in front of the Rescue Statue next to the Walderdale Playhouse, 10521-83 Ave, 780.289.1005 • www.edmontonghosttours.com • Walk through Old Strathcona and hear true stories of ghosts and hauntings • Mon-Thu, until Aug 20, 9pm • \$5

**HISTORICAL TRANSIT TOURS** Departures from City Hall, north side • Edmonton Transit System tours of Edmonton • Until Aug 15 • \$5 (regular tour)/\$10 (premium tour) at TIX on-the Square

**HOME-ENERGISING SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY FOR PASSIONATE LIVING** Gurneau/Ashbourne Assisted Living Place, 11148-84 Ave • Home: Blends music, drama, creativity and reflection on sacred texts to energise you for passionate living • Every Sun 3-5pm

**HOW TO FIND THE MAN OF YOUR DREAMS** FantasyLand Hotel, WEM, www.findtheman.com • A discussion surrounding relationships -empowering women to gain knowledge and confidence to acquire and keep the kind of relationship they want, presented by speaker and author Robin J. Elliott • Thu, Aug 13, 6pm (door); 7:30 (begins) • Portion of proceeds donated to Ballerina Dreams

**KARMA TASHI LING** 10502-70 Ave, 780.633.6157 • karmatashiling.ca • Tranquility Meditation and Zen-ning Practice with Ani Kunzang • Every Wed 7pm

**SLOW FOOD EDMONTON** • slowfoodedmonton.ca • Greens, Eggs and Ham Picking Picnic in Ladue County • Sun, Aug 16, 1-6pm • \$30 (bring your own chair, plate, bowl, cutlery, glass)

**SAUMER TIME ALPACA CRIA TIME** 1/2 hour northwest of Edmonton, 780.967.2689 • saumertimealpacaranch.com • Meet the new alpaca babies • Aug 16, 11am-5 pm

**SUGARSWING DANCE CLUB** Orange Hall, 10335-84 Ave, 780.604.7572 • sugarswing.com • Swing Dance at Sugar Foot Stomp: no experience needed, beginner lesson followed by dance every Sat • Sat, Aug 15, Aug 22, 8pm (door)

**WOMEN IN BLACK** In Front of the Old Strathcona Farmers' Market • Silent vigil the 1st and 3rd Sat, 10-11am, each month, stand in silence for a world without violence

**WORLD BASSETT RACES** • inspiredgardens.ca • Contests and dog displays • Admission is by donation, proceeds go to Basset Rescue • Aug 16, 1pm

## COMEDY

**CENTURY CASINO** 13103 Fort Rd, 780.481.9857 • Shows start at 8pm Thu-Sat and late show at 10:30pm on Fri-Sat • (780) 481-9857 • 13103 Lubin Aug 14-15 • Chris Quigley; Aug 21-22 • Jasen Frederickson; Aug 28-29

**COMEDY FACTORY** Gateway Entertainment Centre, 34 Ave, Calgary Trail • Thu, 8:30pm; Sat, 8pm and 10pm • That's Improv; Aug 14-15 • Leif Skywing; Aug 21-22; Dave Stawnychy; Aug 28-29

**COMIC STRIP** Bourbon St, WEM, 780.483.5999 • Wed-Fri, Sun 8pm; Fri-Sat 10:30pm • Chad Daniels, Mike Harrison and Shawn Gramiak; until Aug 16 • Hit or Miss Monday's; Mon, Aug 17 • Trailer Trash Tuesday's: featuring Kathleen McGee; Tue, Aug 18 • Last Comic Standing contestant: Tim Young, John Ramcharam, Matt Wojcik and Kathleen McGee; Wed, Aug 19-23 • Hit or Miss Monday's: amateur comedy night; Mon, Aug 24 • The Best of Edmonton; Tue, Aug 25

**DRUID** 11606 Jasper Ave, 780.710.2119 • Comedy Night: Hosted by Lars Callieou • Every Sun, 9pm

**LAUGH SHOP-Whyte** 2nd Fl, 10368-82 Ave, 780.476.1010 • thelaughshop.ca • Fringe events; Aug 13-23

## QUEER

**AFFIRM SUNNYBROOK-Red Deer** Sunnybrook United Church, Red Deer, 403.347.6073 • Affirm welcome LGBTQ people and their friends, family, and allies meet the 2nd Tue, 7pm, each month

**BISEXUAL WOMEN'S COFFEE GROUP** • A social group for bi-curious and bisexual women every 2nd Tue of the month, 8pm • groups.yahoo.com/group/bw Edmonton

**BOOTS BAR AND LOUNGE** 10242-106 St, 780.423.5014, www.bootsbar.ca • 2nd Thu: Illusions Social Club • 3rd Wed: Edmonton O Society • 2nd Tue: Edmonton Rainbow Business Association • Every Fri: Philosophy Cafe • Fri and Sat DJ SeXXXy Sean 10-3 • Long Weekend Sundays feature the Stardust Lounge with Miss Bianca and Vanity Fair

**BUDDYS NITE CLUB** 11725B Jasper Ave, 780.488.7736 • DJ Dust 'n' Time; Mon 9pm • DJ Arrow Chaser; Tue 9pm • DJ Dust 'n' Time; Wed 9pm; no cover before 10pm • DJ Arrow Chaser; Fri 8pm; no cover before 10pm • DJ Barth Shiver 'n' Quake; Sat 8pm; no cover before 10pm • DJ Bobby Beatz; Sun 9pm • Drag Queen Performance Show; Sun; no cover before 10pm

**EDMONTON PRIME TIMERS (EPT)** Unitarian Church of Edmonton, 10804-119 St • A group of older gay men and their admirers who have common interests meet the 2nd Sun, 2:30pm, most months for a social period, short meeting and guest speaker, discussion panel or potluck supper. Special interest groups meet for other social activities throughout the month. E: edmontonpt@yahoo.ca, www.prime-timersww.org/edmonton

**GLBT SPORTS AND RECREATION** www.teamedmonton.ca • Women's Drop-In Recreational Badminton; Oliver School Gym, 10227-118 St, 780.465.3620; Wed, 6-7:30pm • Bootcamp; Lynwood Elementary School at 15451-84 Ave; Mon, 7-8:15pm; bootcamp@teamedmonton.ca • Bowling; Gateway Lanes, 100, 3414 Gateway Blvd; Sat, 5-7pm; bowling@teamedmonton.ca • Curling; Mon, 7:15-9:15pm; Granite Curling Club; 780.463.5942 • Running; Sun, Tue, Thu, running@teamedmonton.ca • Swimming; NAIT pool, 11762-106 St; Tue, 8-9pm, Thu, 7:30-8:30pm; swimming@teamedmonton.ca • Volleyball; Tue Recreational; Mother Teresa Elementary School at 9008-105A, 8-10pm; Thu intermediate: Amiskwaciy Academy, 101 Airport Rd, 8-10pm; recvolleyball@teamedmonton.ca; volleyball@teamedmonton.ca • YOGA (Hatha): Free Yoga every Sun, 2-3:30pm; Korezone Fitness, 203, 10575-115 St, yoga@teamedmonton.ca

**ILLUSIONS SOCIAL CLUB: CROSSDRESSERS** 780.387.3343 • meet monthly • For info go to groups.yahoo.com/group/edmonton\_illusions/

**INSIDE/OUT** U of A Campus • Campus-based organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans-identified and queer (LGBTQ) faculty, graduate student, academic, straight allies and support staff • 3rd Thu each month (fall/winter terms): Speakers Series: Contact Kris (kris@uofa.ca)

**LIVING POSITIVE** 404, 10408-124 St, www.

edmlivingpositive.ca, 1.877.975.9448/780.488.5768 • Providing confidential peer support to people living with HIV • Tue, 7-9pm: Support group • Daily drop-in, peer counselling

**MAKING WAVES SWIMMING CLUB** www.geocities.com/makingwaves\_edm • Recreational/competitive swimming. Socializing after practices • Every Tue, Thu

**PLAY NIGHTCLUB** 10220-103 St, www.play-nightclub.ca • Open Thu, Fri, Sat • The first bar for the queer community to open in a decade with DJs Alexx Brown and Eddie Toonflash

**PRIDE CENTRE OF EDMONTON** 9540-111 Ave, 780.488.3234, www.pridecentreofedmonton.org • Open Tue-Fri 1-10pm, Sat 2-6:30pm • LGBT Seniors Drop-in: Every Tue/Thu, 2-4pm • CA: Thu (7pm) • Suit Up and Show Up: AA big book study group every Sat, noon • Youth Understanding Youth: Up to 25 years, support and social group every Sat, 7-9pm; yuy@shaw.ca • Womonspace: Board meeting 1st Sun every month, 10:30am-12:30pm • Trans Education/Support Group: Meet the 1st and 3rd Sun, 2-4pm, every month; www.albertatrans.org • Men Talk: 2-4pm • 2nd Sat: 7pm; Facilitator: Rob Wells robwells780@hotmail.com • HIV Support Group: 2nd Mon every month, 7pm • Transgender, Transsexual, Intersex and Questioning (TTIQ) Alliance: Support meeting and Tue every month, 7:30pm • Transgender, Transsexual, Intersex and Questioning, Education, advocacy and support for men, women and youth • Free short-term, solution-focused drop-in counselling; Wed, 7-10pm • YouthSpace: drop-in for LGBTQ for youth up to 25; Tue-Sat, 3-7pm

**PRISM BAR** 10524-101 St, 780.990.0038 • Wed: Free Pool; Karaoke, 9pm-midnight • Thu: Prism Pool League; 7-11:30pm • Fri: Steak Nites; 5-9pm; DJ at 9:30pm

**ROBERTSON-WESLEY UNITED CHURCH** 10209-123 St, 780.482.1587 • Soul OUTing: an LGBT-focused alternative worship • and Sun every month, 7pm; worship Sun, 10:30am; people of all sexual orientations welcome. LGBT monthly book club and film night. E: jravenouscroft@rwuc.org

**ST PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH** 11526-76 Ave, 780.436.5555 • People of all sexual orientations are welcome • Every Sun (10am worship)

**WOMONSPACE** 780.482.1794, www.womonspace.ca, womonspace@gmail.com • A Non-profit lesbian social organization for Edmonton and surrounding area. Monthly activities, newsletter, reduced rates included with membership. Confidentiality assured • Prism Bar, 10524-101 St; Womonspace Games Nite: Games and \$2 Pool Tournament; Fri, Aug 21, 7pm; womonspace.ca

**WOODYS** 11723 Jasper Ave, 780.488.6557 • Karaoke with Nathan; Mon 8pm • Martini Mondays; 3pm • You Don't Know Game Show with Patrick and Nathan; Thu 9pm • Long Island Iced Tea; Thu 3pm • Karaoke with Morgan; Wed 7pm • Karaoke with Kevin; Sun 8pm

**YOUTH UNDERSTANDING YOUTH** www.yuyedm.ca • Meets every Sat, 7-9pm • Contact Scott for info email: info@yuyedm.ca, T: 780.248.1971

## SPECIAL EVENTS

**AINEMBABAZI CHILDREN'S PROJECT: SKYDIVE FOR AFRICA 2009** Eden North Parachute School • edennorth.com • To improve the quality of life for orphans in Africa. Details at ainembabazi.org/skydive.htm • Sat, Aug 22 • Proceeds go to support projects in Uganda

**ALBERTA BOUND TATTOO AND ARTS FESTIVAL** Shaw Conference Centre, 9797 Jasper Ave • calgarytattoos.com • Aug 21-23 • \$20 (day pass)/\$40 (weekend pass) available online at calgarytattoos.com; weekend passes available at Ticketmaster

**COWBOY POETRY AND COUNTRY MUSIC FESTIVAL** • Stony Plain-Exhibition Park, 780.968.6773 • stonyplaincowboypoetry.com • A tribute to cowboy poetry, music and art • Aug 16-18 • Tickets available at the gate

**EAST MEETS WEST** 107A Ave-95 St/Giovanni Caboto Park and 97 St • alternativetrends.com • Street Market and Festival: Two Cultures in One Community, A Celebration of Arts, Culture and Entertainment • Sat, Aug 22, 10am-10pm

**EDMONTON DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL 2009** Louise McKinney Park, 780.493.8158 • edbfa.com • Dragon boat racing on the North Saskatchewan River • Aug 21-23

**EDMONTON'S EASTWOODFEST** 118 Ave, 82 St-87 St; Eastwood Park on 86 St and 118 Ave • avenueinitiative.ca • StreetDance celebration with street performers, an antique car show, an arts market, and live music including Captain Tractor, the Wambats, and others • Aug 15, 11am-7pm

**ROCK THE SQUARE** • Sir Winston Churchill Square • rockthesquare.com • Featuring Edmontonian rock musicians/bands • Aug 22, 12-12midnight

**UNDER THE BIG TOP FESTIVAL** Festival Place, Sherwood Park • For 6-8 years on Aug 17-21 • For 9-17 years on Aug 24-28 • Info and tickets at 780.449.FEST, www.festivalplace.ab.ca • In The Centre Ring: Sat, Aug 22, 2pm; \$10 • Magic In The Air: Sat, Aug 29, 7:30pm; \$22-\$26 • Puppet Picnic: Sun, Aug 23, 2-4pm; free

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**08/22**  
**THIS IS WAR**  
**HERE WE STRIKE**  
IN THE MIST OF A MURDER / CALLAHAN

**08/28 OH SNAP PRESENTS**  
**THE GLITCH MOB**  
**{OOAH & BORETA}**  
**DJ DEGREE & GUESTS**

**08/29 CD RELEASE**  
**ATLAS SHRUG**  
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**09/05**  
**BENEFIT OF A DOUBT**  
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**08/29 CD RELEASE**  
**ALBERTA BOUND TATTOO AND ARTS FESTIVAL** Shaw Conference Centre, 9797 Jasper Ave • calgarytattoos.com • Aug 21-23 • \$20 (day pass)/\$40 (weekend pass) available online at calgarytattoos.com; weekend passes available at Ticketmaster

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**THOMAS MARSH**  
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**08/21 FEMME DE FORCE (A NIGHT OF FEMALE POWERED HARD ROCK)**  
**LOOKING EAST**  
JEZIBELLE & SAMNDRIEL

**08/22**  
**PASSENGER**  
**ACTION**  
VIKING FELL & GAB'N

**08/25 FROM VICTORIA**  
**LIZ BEATTIE**

**08/28**  
**AS IT STANDS**  
SIX STRING LOADED  
RECENT EVENTS OF TOMORROW

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AND HE IS US / FIFTH & VEGAS

**09/04**  
**LEFT SPINE DOWN**  
**PSYKKLE**  
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# Inflatable darling

Dear Andrea:

We were watching Mythbusters and they were using inflatable dolls instead of crash test dummies. That didn't work very well but it did make me wonder, does anyone ever use those for actual sex?

Love, Blow Me Down

Dear Blow:

Who knows? Any attempt to answer this scientifically would be hampered by the inevitable sample problem: would even the most dedicated enthusiast actually admit to putting the thing to its supposed intended purpose?

If I had to guess, I'd say yes. Men have been known to stick it into condoms full of warm oatmeal, into watermelons and allegedly into a piece of liver intended for the family dinner. How, could at least some tiny fraction of male mankind not

be expected to stick it into what passes for a genital orifice in a vinyl novelty device? Of course some do. But mostly not, I'd assume, and mostly not often, or even twice.

Once upon a time I had a boyfriend who lived in a foul two-bedroom with a roommate of disreputable habits. Before Roommate's birthday one year, Boyfriend and another, equally disreputable friend went off to a Tenderloin sex shop and bought a ... fuckhead. That's what we called it, and that's what it was, a softish mannequin head, like a Barbie's Hair Salon head but horribly porny, with a round, gaping maw and frizzly blond curls which shed distressingly when you attempted to grasp the thing like, well, a head. It was ghastly and we could not imagine anybody ever using such a creation for its intended purpose—nobody

even wanted to touch the thing.

No, that story did not have a point. I just wanted to tell it.

Of course, decades after the invention of rarely fucked inflatable love dolls (and by the way, they make sheep, too, but I can't remember now if it's actually sold as a "Love Ewe" or if my friends and I made that up), the Real Doll debuted to enormous media hullabaloo and respectable sales. Fairly or not, and nicely or not, I ascribed those respectable sales to the concurrent dot-com bubble and the sudden wealth it showered upon a lot of guys with good coding skills and not so much experience talking to girls. The Real Doll, in case you were sleeping, is a fairly realistic (only slightly less realistic than Jenna Jameson, for instance), life-sized, customizable silicone sex partner. According to their site, you can buy some models on super-special this month

for less than \$6000: "order a female flat-back torso get the head kit free." In fact, the company is, as they say, "going out for business".

In These Difficult Economic Times, Abyss Creations Is Doing Our Part To Help.

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They are doing their part. Are you doing yours?

The Real Doll appears to have had its moment in the sun (a good idea, actually, since silicone warms to body temperature very readily). If the New York Times, of all things, is to be believed, the coming thing in fake sex partners is not a semi-realistic girl-shaped thing, nor the expected, immanent online, plug-in cybermate. It's a ... pillow.

The Times article (tinyurl.com/m6qo4r)

is about Japanese "2D lovers," a subset of obsessive anime fandom who carry on what at least feels to them like real relationships with representations of anime characters, often, ickily, prepubescent girls. The article never says what, exactly, people like the profiled "Nisan" ("big brother") do with a stuffed pillowcase printed with the image of a 10-year-old in a bikini, besides carrying it around and ordering it a bowl of soup and calling it their girlfriend.

Japan is, of course, kind of a special case. According to the Times article, "more than a quarter of men and women between the ages of 30 and 34 are virgins; 50 percent of men and women in Japan do not have friends of the opposite sex." I'm hanging onto the hope that the fact that the same cannot be said of North Americans will provide us at least partial immunity to the spread of a similar craze here, but I think we can trust a certain subset of geek-hipsters to at least claim to have adopted it.

Love, Andrea

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VAAA Gallery Call for Submissions  
VAAA is seeking submissions for the 2010/11 schedule. Deadline: Mon, Sept. 21, 4pm; mail or drop off to Visual Arts Alberta Association, Attn Annual Exhibition Call for submission, Allison Argy-Burgess, Executive Director 3rd Fl, 10215-112 St, T5K 1M7, T: 780.421.1731 for info

Call for artists—Kaleido 2009 Art Festival, Sept 25-27. Looking for all styles of work, any medium for art show and sale. Vendors for art market wanted also. Contact aota\_artists@yahoo.ca for details

2010 EARTH EXHIBIT CALL TO ENTER:  
The Works Art & Design Festival is currently accepting applications to take part in the 2010 Core Program of themed exhibits. Deadline: Aug 29, 2009. Download application at www.theworks.ab.ca

Call for Submissions for Gallery at Milner  
Deadline: Oct 15, 2009; inquiries/applcations to: Art Selection Committee T: 780.496.7030; E: cragalleries&displays@epl.ca

Submit exhibits for consideration in the following categories: Environmental Site Specific Installation; Curated Group Exhibit, Individual or Two Artist Exhibit, and Community Programs are invited to participate in 2010 at The Works Art Market and Food Street (deadline Feb. 15, 2010) and Street Stage (deadline Mar. 15, 2010). Application at www.theworks.ab.ca

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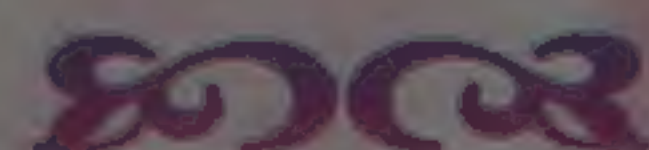


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